the weekly Standard

NOVEMBER 17, 2003

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ELECTION 2003 (AND 2004)
Fred Barnes • Jeffrey Bell

Who Does Howard Dean Think He Is?

by David Tell

Plus

Matt Labash on "Rock the Vote"
Dave Juday on Dean's farm folly

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the weekly Standard

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More Baloney from Clark

Sometime in November 2001, Gen. Wesley Clark, former NATO supreme commander and future Democratic candidate for president, visited the Pentagon. Whereupon, in conversation with "a man with three stars who used to work for me," Clark stumbled across the Bush administration's secret "five-year plan" to remake the Middle East, Central Asia, and northern Africa. The administration's radical vision in the wake of the September 11 attacks, Clark was told, would include taking military action not only against Afghanistan and Iraq, but also "Syria, Lebanon, Libya, Iran, Somalia, and Sudan." Clark's source told him, "We're not that good at fighting terrorists, so we're going after states." What's more, "There's a list of countries."

Or not. Clark, who tells this story in his new book, *Winning Modern Wars*, as well as in a September 2003 interview with *Rolling Stone* magazine, has no proof of any of this. And how does THE SCRAPBOOK know Clark has no proof? Easy. He admits it.

Last week, when a reporter for the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette* asked the general whether he had ever seen the target list himself, Clark replied that no, he had not. And, what's more, he wasn't even *interested* in seeing it. So aghast at the administration's plans for unending war was he, Clark told his friend to be quiet. "I said, 'Stop, I don't want to see anything more,'" Clark explained to the *Democrat-Gazette*. "I just didn't want to get into it."

The lack of evidence, Clark hastened to point out, doesn't mean the list was imaginary. Or that there was no "five-year plan." Because, after all, "they told me there was something, some kind of memo or something." And really, the general noted, "You only have to listen to the gossip around Washington and to hear what the neoconservatives are saying, and you will get the flavor of this."

THE SCRAPBOOK gets the flavor of what Clark is saying. It tastes like baloney. Which, come to think of it, is the flavor of a lot of his gossipy innuendo about the Bush administration.

A couple of weeks ago, after *USA Today* published Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld's leaked memo on the war on terror, Clark said that Rumsfeld "had to leak his own memo," because otherwise "no one would have believed him" that the Bush administration doesn't "know how to measure success" in the war on terror. How, the reporters trailing Clark wanted to know, did the general learn that the memo was leaked by the secretary of defense himself? "Well," Clark answered, "that's what the rumor is, and it's been talked about on the Sunday talk shows."

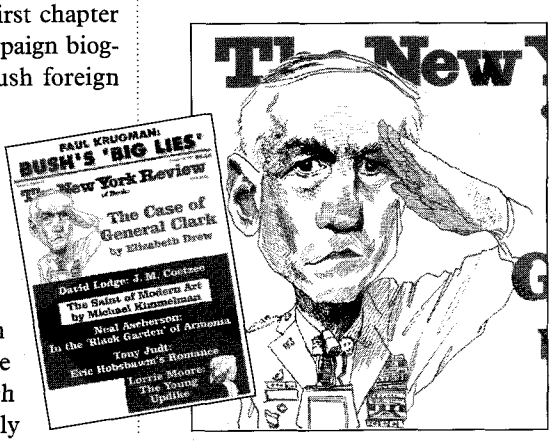
Q.E.D. (Not that we have anything against the Sunday talk shows.)

You may be wondering why Clark's charges haven't received more attention from the press and the other Democratic presidential candidates. Well, we hear that the general has already been written off as a serious contender for the Democratic nomination.

That's what the rumor is, anyway. ♦

They Finally Found a General to Admire

In late October, the *New York Review of Books* published the first chapter in Gen. Wesley Clark's campaign biography, an attack on the Bush foreign policy entitled "Iraq: What Went Wrong." It was replete with photos of Clark in uniform—steely-eyed, meditative, determined. The cover of its latest issue (November 20) is given over to Elizabeth Drew's adverbially effusive paean to the general, which praises him as "exceptionally intelligent," "highly ambitious," and "exceptionally independent."



Drew thinks the big question confronting Clark's candidacy is whether voters can overlook the widespread negative judgments that are now being voiced by those who served over, under, and with him in the Army. These negative judgments arise from jealousy, in Drew's view, which in turn arises from Clark's gifts.

The *NYRB*'s editors, at least, have been able to set aside the bad marks, and are willing to admit Clark to the Oval Office on the basis of his test scores. Drew is impressed by something Clark told her recently: "A president has to have, like any chief executive, an ability to focus on the decisive issues in some degree of detail—he can't just preside and chair meetings while his aides grapple with all the details."

This ability to grapple with detail

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apparently is a decisive difference between Clark and President Bush. And, for that matter, between Clark and *NYRB* illustrator David Levine, whose cover sketch shows the general saluting with his left hand. ♦

Newsroom Choices

Earlier this year, we reprinted a memo from *Los Angeles Times* editor John Carroll to his newsroom, owning up to and condemning his paper's bias against pro-lifers. Carroll mentioned a reference to "so-called counseling of patients" by pro-lifers, noting, "I don't think people on the anti-abortion side would consider it 'so-called,' a phrase that is loaded with derision."

We're not yet prepared to call it a trend, but Carroll now has company in the Midwest. The *Chicago Tribune*'s public editor, Don Wycliff, has weighed in with a November 6 column responding to reader complaints about the *Tribune*'s one-sidedness on the abortion issue, specifically an AP story about partial-birth abortion several days before President Bush's November 5 signing of a ban on the practice.

Here are some excerpts: "What provoked the ire of . . . letter-writers were the headlines. In some editions the headline read, 'Anti-choice groups celebrate victories.' In others it was 'Anti-choice victories alarm pro-choice groups.'"

"In either case," wrote Wycliff, "the flaw was the same: The perspective of those who define the issues involved in terms of 'choice' was taken as normative, and the position of those who disagree with them and define the issues differently was characterized in 'choice' terms. The result was two headlines that couldn't have been more slanted if they had come directly from the public relations office of NARAL Pro-Choice America."

This was "not the only recent example of the difficulty the *Tribune* has in writing about the issue of abortion or, if you will, 'life' or 'choice.'

"On Sept. 7, there was the publication . . . of a letter from Bill Beckman, executive director of the Illinois Right to Life Committee, in which each of his uses of 'pro-life' was changed to 'anti-abortion,' to conform to the *Tribune* stylebook proscription against use of the term pro-life. Happily, editor Ann Marie Lipinski has since decided that that rule need not be applied to letters to the editor." ♦

Wiggles Revisited

Our recitation last week of the good works of Chief Wiggles—the pseudonymous Utah national guardsman in the 141st military intelligence battalion who started a toy drive for Iraqi children—moved several readers to make detailed inquiries about how they could contribute. Full information can be found at the website of the nonprofit *www.operationgive.org*. For those not yet online, toys and useful items like school supplies can be sent directly to Operation Give Warehouse, 7155 Columbia Gateway Drive, Columbia, MD 21046. ♦

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Casual

Black Tie and Tales

The other night, I went to a fancy gala at the National Building Museum. As I strolled between the towering, golden Corinthian columns of the great hall, I felt sophisticated in my off-the-shoulder black dress, and chatted easily with a friendly professor about his course on the American presidency. When dinner was announced, we made our way to elegantly set round tables. But soon, the aura of refinement surrounding the whole occasion started subtly slipping, till all at once I realized I was out of place. It may have been the little gilded chairs.

Darren Gygi

You see them at wedding receptions and bar mitzvahs and generic black tie business functions: rented chairs recalling a hundred such events I've attended in my many years on the capital's social circuit—as the hired help.

Watching the servers emerge from the edges of the vast room and fan out among the tables bearing trays and tureens to serve 900, I underwent a role reversal in my head—from guest to gofer.

No longer was I one of the gracious pampered. My sense of identification with the servers was too strong. Feeling like a fraud in my finery, all I could think of were the innumerable weekends *I've* spent in a bow tie and neatly pressed tuxedo blouse working as a caterer's assistant, a job I sometimes think of as "whining and dining."

"Yes, Sir, I am aware many people prefer Sweet'N Low, but I'm afraid all we have is sugar." "Actually, tonight we're serving Chardonnay, not Zinfandel." "Oh, no, Ma'am, we wouldn't dream of having you eat beef. Your request didn't make it to the kitchen, but I'll be right back with a vegetarian meal."

Patience isn't the only virtue catering forces you to cultivate. Brute strength is useful, especially for rolling tables and portable ovens up hills. And coordination. I can wipe cocktail sauce off my lapel while holding a shrimp platter steady for double-dipping wedding guests with the greatest of ease.

Not that I haven't had my off days. My least favorite memory is the time I spilled an entire tray of lemonade at a wedding reception whose price tag would have made J. Lo blanch—and got a piece of glass stuck in my finger. After the tray went crashing, some guests clapped. For the rest of the evening, no matter how inconspicuously I tried to go about my duties, guests kept coming up to me with the same dreaded question: "Were you the girl who spilled the lemonade? That was something!"

At the opposite end of the catering-memories spectrum is the best party I ever worked. I have a picture to remember it by. It shows me crouching next to my fellow servers, with lots of children and miscellaneous grownups. I'm smiling broadly. In the center of the group, sitting on his father's lap, is a 6-year-old shielding his face from the sun. He is Elián González.

The party was held at a house on Maryland's Eastern Shore. It was a thank-you and farewell in honor of the people who'd helped take care of Elián during his stay in America, while the courts and politicians wrangled over the fate of the young Cuban refugee. In a few days, the boy and his father would return to Cuba.

The afternoon was sweltering. I was stationed at the bar, serving Coronas to the grownups—aunts, uncles, INS officials—and Coca-Colas to Elián and his cousins. I got to practice my rudimentary Spanish, and talked with the fisherman who'd discovered Elián at sea, floating in an inner tube all by himself, after the boat had capsized and his mother had drowned.

The Gonzálezes were lovely people, the most gracious group I've ever had the pleasure of serving. The sun was setting as they left and we waved goodbye. I remember closing up the bar, loosening my tie, and sitting down with my own ice cold Corona to relive the day.

"Coffee, Ma'am?" the server at the National Building Museum asked, jolting me out of my reverie. "Yes, please," I replied.

The gala din of 900 forks clattering against 900 dessert plates was all around me. People were starting to put on their glasses and turn their chairs so as to get a good view of the after-dinner speaker, a famous conservative writer. It seemed like a good idea. As I shifted my own gilded chair, I felt my world getting larger.

Erin Montgomery

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When Congress was considering whether to deregulate the cable industry seven years ago, cable companies promised to invest in new broadband technologies and services. And since cable was deregulated by the Telecommunications Act of 1996, the industry has invested over $75 billion, and cable customers are enjoying an avalanche of new home entertainment and information technologies.

A cable home is quite different from a non-cable home these days. It's more likely to have Video-On-Demand that puts people in complete control of their TV schedules. They can watch more of what they want, whenever they want, and with better quality. And they may be enjoying high-speed Internet service that leaves dial-up and DSL in the digital dust.

Add in the picture and sound clarity of high-definition TV as well as hundreds of new digital video and audio channels, and the totally wired home has arrived.

CRITICS AND VIEWERS LOVE CABLE

Cable has changed – and so have consumer attitudes. Consumers are enjoying the programming and services that cable offers more than ever before.

It's hard to overstate how cable has inspired television writers and directors. Channels like MTV, ESPN and The History Channel as well as shows like *Six Feet Under*, *Trading Spaces* and *SpongeBob SquarePants* have broken new ground.

Critics have responded. At this year's Emmy Awards, cable shows won Emmys in category after category – 78 winners in all. Same story earlier this year when the Peabodys and Golden Globes were announced.

And viewers are voting with their remotes. For the first time, more people are watching cable during primetime than the broadcast networks. And cable news channels account for 60% of all TV news viewership.

ONE OF THE BEST ENTERTAINMENT VALUES IN AMERICA

With so much entertainment now available at the touch of a remote, cable has become one of the best values in entertainment today.

To compare, the average monthly basic cable bill is about $40, less than what it costs to take a family of four to a night out at the movies. That's a pretty good deal.

A DEREGULATION SUCCESS STORY

In the past seven years, the cable industry has undergone a major transformation. Today's cable companies are more consumer-focused than ever before. Customer satisfaction is on the rise.

It's all because deregulation enabled cable companies to invest in new technologies and services to become more competitive. And compete they do. They battle with the satellite dish companies for TV customers. They compete with the phone companies for Internet and phone service. And as they introduce time-shifting technologies, they go up against video stores.

These are the results of Congress deregulating the cable industry. Talk about impact. This is not the cable business of seven years ago. This is an industry that's on the move. On faster forward, if you will.

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Bad Boykin

Regarding David Gelernter's recent defense of Lt. Gen. William Boykin ("Onward, Christian Soldier!" Nov. 3), several points come to mind.

First, it is one thing for a pundit to say the United States is a "Christian country." It is quite another for a high-ranking general to assert it, in uniform, in a church, on video. One is merely an opinion; the other could be construed by those not given to Gelernter's brand of thoughtful distinction (which might fairly describe much of the Muslim masses to whom we wish to appeal) to be something like official policy.

It is also one thing to profess one's Christian faith, another to disdain Islam as Boykin did, and yet another to cast the war on terror in exactly the kind of stark, religious terms that President Bush has avoided so assiduously. Boykin's subsequent apologies cannot conceal the clarity of his original statements; he was obviously not disparaging merely the "false god" of riches (how rich is even the richest Somali warlord?). With a single statement, he has probably undone years of pleading by Bush and others that this is not a war against Islam.

As if all of this wasn't bad enough, we have an undersecretary of defense who sees direct evidence of Satan in a black smudge on a photograph, and doesn't even feel foolish saying so in public. If this is the kind of person we have overseeing the vanguard of the war on terror, we have reason to be very afraid.

No doubt Boykin has served his country with distinction these many years, but he is not irreplaceable. The damage done by his statements, and by his continuance in his post, has likely outweighed his contributions. He is not worthy of a defense by Gelernter or any other thoughtful person, and should be fired immediately and very publicly.

David Curtin
San Angelo, TX

History teaches that wars of religion cannot be won. When military conflicts are framed in theology, the fight transcends worldly considerations like reason and reality, victory and defeat, or even life and death. Religious wars, like the medieval Crusades or the Reformation conflicts between Catholics and Protestants, can last for centuries and end only in exhaustion rather than solution. In a religious war, retreat is heresy, death takes the color of martyrdom, and innocent civilians are rendered expendable in light of the eternal stakes of holy conflict.

Al Qaeda and other militant Islamists would like nothing better than to spark a war of religion and have purposefully framed their terrorism in religious terms. By attempting to goad the United States into a declaration of crusade, militant Islamists hope to enlist the entire Islamic community to their hideous cause.

In responding to the attacks of September 11, 2001, the president has

been careful to separate the war on terror from any suggestion of a war on Islam. A war on terrorists must be fought and can be won; a war on Islam should not be fought and cannot be won, not least because America (unlike al Qaeda) is not in the business of relentless and endless religious crusades.

Lt. Gen. William Boykin has fallen into the al Qaeda trap by publicly disparaging all of Islam and framing America's fight as a religious conflict. Boykin, now undersecretary of defense, has thereby undermined the administration's stated policy and unwittingly strengthened the enemy's call for jihad. His intemperate statements are no doubt being circulated by militant Islamists as evidence that shameless terrorism is actually part of a religious war.

Boykin should be made to resign because his statements, made in uniform, undermine America's insistence that the war on terror is absolutely not a war on Islam. It is unacceptable for an undersecretary of defense to contradict the president and strengthen the enemy by promoting a personally inspired war of religion.

Avi Matalon
Assistant Professor of Jewish Studies
Harvard University
Cambridge, MA

I agreed with much of David Gelernter's "Onward, Christian Soldier!" but disagreed strongly with this sentence: "The Constitution confers on Jews and Christians equally the right to behave as if they believed in Judaism and Christianity respectively." Our right to exercise our religious beliefs is not conferred by the Constitution. Rather, it is an unalienable right among the rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. The Constitution was adopted to recognize and to protect that right, among others, from the incursions of government. But the distinction between who confers what rights on men and how those rights are protected is a crucial one. It must be made at every opportunity in a society whose members seem increasingly unaware of the nature of their rights, and even, possibly, of the nature of their humanity.

Charles Claunch
Chicago, IL

David Gelernter asserts, rather blithely, that America is obviously a "Christian nation." But what does that mean? That the majority of the nation is Christian, thus making Christianity the official faith of the land?

That's precisely why we have the *Bill* of Rights—to prevent majoritarian tyranny. Our soldiers, unlike al Qaeda's, do not fight for God or Jesus. They fight to defend the Constitution.

It's frightening that this needs explaining. The United States is a prosperous and thriving country because we emerged from the Enlightenment with a democracy that protects the religious rights of believers and nonbelievers. In contrast, the reason theocracies like Iran and the

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Taliban's Afghanistan are "failed states" is their rigid, medieval religious rule.

Gelernter should know that pluralism is America's greatest strength, not sectarianism.

DAVID BLUM
Bakersfield, CA

JUST DO IT

CHRISTOPHER LYNCH's essay on just-war theory is helpful, and I share his enthusiasm for recovery of just-war theory in the larger culture ("Making War," Nov. 3). Yet interest in just-war theory is not as new a phenomenon as he indicates, and not unique to the progeny of Aquinas.

John Witherspoon, president of the College of New Jersey, Presbyterian pastor, and the only clerical signer of the Declaration of Independence, was familiar with this tradition. Robert Louis Dabney (Union Seminary in Virginia) and B.B. Warfield (Princeton Seminary) were well versed in Augustine and knew this tradition during the Civil War. One of the most articulate Protestant voices, Reinhold Niebuhr (Union Seminary, New York), could draw upon just-war theory during WWII and in resistance to communism. As he wrote, "Pacifists do not know human nature well enough to be concerned about the contradictions between the law of love and the sin of man. . . . It is because men are sinners that justice can be achieved only by a certain degree of coercion on the one hand, and by resistance to coercion and tyranny on the other hand. The political life of man must constantly steer between the Scylla of anarchy and the Charybdis of tyranny."

STEVEN WILLIS
Cincinnati, OH

BALANCING ACT

GERARD ALEXANDER's defense against Bush's foreign policy critics ("An Unbalanced Critique of Bush," Nov. 3) is fine as far as it goes, but like the Maginot line, it doesn't go far enough. Or more precisely, it misses the attack entirely. The substantive critique of Bush's unilateral foreign policy is not that the United States is creating new enemies in (continental) Europe, as Alexander claims, but that we are failing to enlist our friends in a battle against the enemies we already have. Imagine, to use an ironic historical analogy, if the French and Americans had so disliked each other that the United States had refused to enter the war against Germany.

ROBERT MEYER
New York, NY

ANIMAL KINGDOM

THE WEEKLY STANDARD's coverage of the Terri Schiavo case is important and on target (THE SCRAPBOOK, Nov. 3). While the Florida legislature's passage of "Terri's Law" opens the possibility for state intervention to ensure "nutrition and hydration" under limited circumstances, it does not go as far as the Pennsylvania house bill 840 of this year. This bill makes it an offense to deny "necessary sustenance, drink, shelter" to those over whom one has "duty of care." Lest hope be raised regarding the sanctity of human life, the Pennsylvania house bill applies only to pets. It is a sad commentary on our times when animals are given more protection under law than humans.

MEL KULBICKI
York College of Pennsylvania
York, PA

IRAQ FLAK

A Black Hawk helicopter that crashed in Tikrit two weeks ago did not, in fact, come under RPG fire only after it hit the ground, as Stephen F. Hayes reported in "Under Fire in Baghdad" (Nov. 10). CENTCOM has since confirmed that an RPG brought down the chopper, as CNN first reported.

It was also reported in "Under Fire in Baghdad" that Major General Raymond Odierno commands the 4th Armored division. In fact, he commands the 4th Infantry Division.

We regret the errors. ♦

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Recovery or Snow Job?

Treasury Secretary John Snow says the economy is turning around. The question is, "Which economy?"

While the GDP grew 7.2% last quarter, 146,000 jobs were lost. Profits are up, but jobs are down. The CEO economy is doing better, but on Main Street the news is grim.

More than 34 million Americans, including 12 million kids, live below the poverty line. Nine million people are unemployed. Just since Bush took office, 2.5 million manufacturing jobs have been cut or sent overseas. Meanwhile, displaced workers aren't being trained for new jobs. Health care and college tuitions have seen double-digit increases since 2000. And according to the Federal Reserve, household debt, when compared to disposable income, is at a 20-year peak.

The CEO economy is up, but on Main Street the news is grim.

Even the CEO economy is bound to stumble. The markets won't tolerate the fiscal recklessness and heavy debt the White House has embraced. Alexander Hamilton, our first secretary of the treasury, knew this. He proposed paying down the Continental Congress' war debts – not cutting taxes – to shore up America's business climate.

Last winter, while selling another round of tax cuts, the White House promised the cuts would create 306,000 jobs a month. That didn't happen. As the Economic Policy Institute and Campaign for America's Future point out, Secretary Snow's recent claim of 200,000 new jobs a month rings as hollow as last year's promise.

Patriots of the past, like Hamilton, were honest with citizens during tough times. For many Americans these are such times.

To get the facts, visit www.JobWatch.org. For more "snow job" analysis go to www.TomPaine.com.

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the weekly Standard

Exit Strategy or Victory Strategy?

The front page of the November 7 *Washington Post* says it all. The first headline, in large type: "Bush Urges Commitment to Transform Mideast." Below, in slightly smaller type: "Pentagon to Shrink Iraq Force." And below that: "Iraqi Security Crews Getting Less Training." It's a jarring juxtaposition. The president eloquently makes the case for a necessarily and admirably ambitious foreign policy. Yet his own administration's deeds threaten the achievement of his goals.

In his fine speech to the National Endowment for Democracy last Thursday, the president made the case for "a forward strategy of freedom" in the Middle East. He put the Iraq conflict in its proper context: "the establishment of a free Iraq at the heart of the Middle East will be a watershed event," but "the failure of Iraqi democracy would embolden terrorists around the world, increase dangers to the American people, and extinguish the hopes of millions in the region." Or, as the president said earlier in the week: "The enemy in Iraq believes America will run. That's why they're willing to kill innocent civilians, relief workers, coalition troops. America will never run. America will do what is necessary . . ."

Except, apparently, increase American troop strength or take the time properly to train Iraqi security forces. On the Sunday talk shows at the beginning of last week, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld didn't exactly say that we were going to run, but he certainly sounded as if he were eyeing the exits. He emphasized that "you've got to get the security responsibility transferred to the Iraqi people. . . . It's their country. . . . We're not going to provide security in their country over a sustained period of time." And then on the same day as the president's speech, the Defense Department announced plans to reduce U.S. forces by about 20 percent in the next few months. The secretary of defense claimed that the rapid growth of Iraqi security forces made this drawdown possible—even though that growth has come at the cost of levels of training previously thought necessary to enable them to do their job.

In other words: The president wants to win, and the Pentagon wants to get out. It's of course *possible* we can do both at once. And it's also true that on the political side, there's a strong case for a faster transfer of power to the Iraqis. But the fact remains that over the short term we have a policy in contradiction with itself. Is it to be a victory strategy or an exit strategy? The president has, since 9/11, prevailed (on key matters) over the status quo foreign policy favored by his State Department. Will he now prevail over his Defense Department as well? After all, speeches are good; troops are better.

Now it's true that the pressures to draw down American forces are real. The Congressional Budget Office warns that the Army does not have sufficient active component forces to "maintain the occupation at its current size, limit deployments to one year, and sustain all of its other commitments" around the world. The CBO is right. But we must also face the reality that we are a nation at war, and normal troop deployment schedules can no longer hold in every instance.

Moreover, almost three years into the Bush administration, the serious deficit in the overall size of American forces can no longer be blamed exclusively on the Clinton administration. When Vice President Dick Cheney was secretary of defense a dozen years ago, he recommended that the Army should have at least 12 divisions to meet American global responsibilities in the post-Cold War world. Today there are 10 divisions. Recently, more than 50 members of the House Armed Services Committee, including committee chairman Duncan Hunter, wrote to Rumsfeld asking him to increase overall troop strength by two divisions. But Rumsfeld remains dogmatically committed to a smaller force, despite the overwhelming evidence that the force is already dangerously inadequate to meet the president's stated strategic requirements.

The immediate danger is that the American mission in Iraq may be the first and most dire casualty of this administration's parsimony. In these pages a few weeks ago, Lewis Lehrman felicitously observed, "prudence counsels that to desire the Bush Doctrine is to desire the indispensable means to make it effective." So far, the Pentagon has shown little interest in developing and deploying the indispensable means to make the Bush Doctrine effective. The stunning victory in the war to remove Saddam has been followed by an almost equally stunning lack of seriousness about winning the peace, despite the vital importance of creating a stable, secure, and democratic Iraq. That is what the Bush

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Doctrine of "regime change" means, or should mean: Not blowing out the bad regime and then leaving others to pick up the pieces, but staying long enough to ensure that a good regime can take its place.

But for that to happen, we need to defeat the increasingly dangerous Baathist and international terrorist groups operating in Iraq. There aren't enough American troops there today to conduct the kind of counterterrorist and counterinsurgency strategy that is needed. In an effort to compensate, the administration has pursued one illusory quick fix after another. First there was the illusion—now dispelled—that international troops would come in and substitute for American forces. With U.S. troops scheduled to rotate out of Iraq in March, Pentagon planners counted on the introduction of two new international divisions. This expectation was fanciful, as we pointed out two months ago. It was unlikely that many foreign forces were ever going to participate in the aftermath of a war their governments did not favor.

The second, more current, and more dangerous illusion is that Iraqi forces can substitute for American forces during the dangerous and critical months ahead. Under the guise of transferring sovereignty to the Iraqi people, a necessary goal in political terms, the Pentagon is looking to reduce significantly the military burden on the United States and shift it onto the Iraqis, and the sooner the better. "It's their country," Rumsfeld says, as if the United States had only fleeting responsibilities in Iraq after invading it. But of course the reason Rumsfeld wants to pass the responsibility to Iraqis has nothing to do with whether they are ready or able to take on that responsibility. It is simply that he wants to bring the level of U.S. forces down.

Two months ago, when signs of deteriorating security in key parts of Iraq became unmistakable, the administration accelerated the enlistment of Iraqis into various security forces. We expressed concern at the time that the too hasty enlistment of Iraqis, some of whom served in Saddam Hussein's murderous security structure, risked alienating average Iraqis and, more significantly, risked putting unreliable people in positions to do great harm. We also questioned whether Iraqi forces could or should take on the task of fighting international terrorists and well-armed Baathist remnants. Two months and a few bombings later, a desperate Pentagon is accelerating the acceleration.

Consider this: In early September, Rumsfeld declared there were 55,000 Iraqis in security forces with another 50,000 planned for 2004. Now suddenly the numbers have doubled. 100,000 Iraqis are allegedly available today, with another 100,000 coming by next summer.

And what do these numbers mean? The Pentagon has been hammering the American provisional government in Baghdad to reduce training requirements for the Iraqi security forces so as to be able to point to rapidly increasing numbers of them, almost regardless (sources in Baghdad tell us) of the actual quality and utility of the training they are getting. It turns out that in order to get this many Iraqis ready for action, training schedules have been absurdly shortened—a 12-week police training program now miraculously takes only 2 weeks. It turns out the Americans don't even have enough weapons and uniforms for all the Iraqis they train. And it will almost certainly turn out to be the case that, as we hurriedly stand up these new Iraqi security forces, more Saddam loyalists will make it into their ranks.

Never mind the message it sends to the Iraqi people to put their old tormenters back on the streets to watch over them. How will we know whether the Iraqi recruits can be trusted not to carry out sabotage? Can American authorities possibly do background checks on so many Iraqis so quickly? Rumsfeld has an admirably frank answer to that question: No, they can't. He seems to believe it's a tolerable risk. It isn't. A few weeks ago, a car bomb was detonated next to an Iraqi police station. The car in which the bomb was rigged was itself a police car. How did a suicide bomber get hold of a police car? Probably, someone recruited by the United States was playing a double game. It takes only a couple of mistakes in background checks to have a disaster, and that assumes you're really conducting background checks. But such incidents will multiply as the hastily assembled and inadequately vetted Iraqi forces take the field.

The Pentagon's consistent denial that we need more troops in Iraq has become absurd. Occasionally, commanders slip and speak the truth. A few weeks ago, General Ricardo Sanchez noted that he had decided to step up operations against the guerrilla-terrorists in the Sunni triangle. To do so, he did the obvious: He increased the number of American troops deployed there. More recently, an American battalion commander noted that intelligence on terrorist actions had improved in August and September. Why? Because the Iraqis in his sector "started to realize they could give us information and we would protect them." How? With lots of American troops visible and readily available to do the protecting. Will Iraqis feel the same confidence if our troops retreat to their garrisons and hastily trained and poorly equipped Iraqi forces take their place?

The president has publicly dedicated his administration to keeping U.S. forces in place as long as necessary to build a democratic Iraq. It would be helpful if the Pentagon implemented a strategy consistent with the president's stated goals. Or we can cross our fingers and just hope it all works out. But that's an irresponsible risk to take. Failing in Iraq would be a strategic calamity worse than America's retreat from Vietnam 30 years ago. As Senator John McCain put it this week, the only acceptable exit strategy is victory. The president calls our effort in Iraq "a massive and difficult undertaking." It is that, and it is also a necessary and admirable one. The question is whether Bush will see to it that his Pentagon does what it takes to make that undertaking succeed.

—William Kristol and Robert Kagan

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Realignment (Continued)

More good news for Republicans in the South.

BY FRED BARNES

REALIGNING ELECTIONS don't occur in odd-numbered years like 2003. Nor do such elections provide foolproof signs of what's coming the next year—in this case, in the 2004 presidential and congressional races. But Republican victories in the governors' races in Mississippi and Kentucky were significant. They reinforced the current political realignment that favors Republicans. The draw in the Virginia legislative elections also buttressed the realignment. And newly assembled polling data further substantiate a major Republican trend.

Though not predictive, last week's results were more encouraging for President Bush than not. Democrats sought to make his economic policy the overriding issue in Kentucky. That tack failed. In Mississippi, Democrats didn't directly target Bush, but they criticized Republican Haley Barbour as a Washington lobbyist out of sync with local concerns. Barbour embraced the label and said he could get more out of Republican-controlled Washington than Democratic governor Ronnie Musgrove. Democrats zeroed in on the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) for causing jobs to leave Mississippi. Democratic presidential candidates and congressmen, too, have been castigating NAFTA. But the anti-NAFTA theme fizzled in Mississippi against Barbour, who, like Bush, supports the trade agreement.

It may be small potatoes, but voter turnout was linked to Bush's campaign stops. In the counties of Kentucky and Mississippi where Bush made appearances, turnout rose dramatically and the Republican candidate for governor benefited. Statewide turnout in Kentucky was up 50 percent over the last governor's race in 1999 and up 15 percent in Mississippi. In one Kentucky county where Bush spoke, turnout soared 252 percent, and the number of votes received by Republican Ernie Fletcher equaled twice the total number of votes cast in 1991. Whatever this means, it's not bad news for Bush.

In the counties where Bush made appearances, turnout rose dramatically and the Republican candidate for governor benefited.

Democrats tried to downplay the losses. Governor Gary Locke of Washington, speaking for the Democratic National Committee, dismissed the defeats as routine for "Republican states." Sure, Bush won Kentucky in 2000, but perhaps Locke forgot that Bill Clinton captured the state in 1992 and 1996 without much trouble. And it's a state that until last week hadn't elected a Republican governor in 32 years. Now it has one, Fletcher. But Democrats control the lower house of the state legislature (65 to 35) and have a 14 percentage-point advantage in voter registration. That's a Republican state? Not quite, but it is a state that's realigning in a Republican direction. Democrats, by the way, hold both houses in the Mississippi legislature and Barbour is only the second Republican governor since the 19th century.

One test of realignment is how a party fares in down-ticket statewide races, those below the governor's level. These races measure whether a party is sinking deep political roots. Until last week, not one Republican had been elected to statewide office in Kentucky, below the governorship, in modern times. Now Kentucky has Republicans in the offices of lieutenant governor, secretary of state, and agriculture commissioner (the aptly named Richie Farmer). In Mississippi, no Republican had ever won a down-ticket office without first being elected as a Democrat and then switching parties. This is true of Lt. Gov. Amy Tuck, reelected as a Republican though initially elected as a Democrat. Last week, however, Tate Reeves was elected state treasurer as a Republican.

What about Virginia? It's a fully realigned state with only Democratic governor Mark Warner to limit Republican hegemony. Warner declared last week's legislative election—covering all 140 seats—to be "good" for Democrats. Good in this case describes two Democratic pickups in the state assembly and the loss of one state senate seat. Republicans retained overwhelming control of the legislature. Now, remember the definition of a realignment. It's when there's a sudden transformation or breakthrough that becomes permanent. After more than a century in the wilderness, Republicans took control in Virginia in the late 1990s. Last week's election shows it's permanent.

Philadelphia and New Jersey tell a different story. Philly mayor John Street, a Democrat, was reelected, and Democrats won full control of the New Jersey legislature. Still, Republicans won more votes statewide in New Jersey than Democrats. They lost seats because of Democratic gerrymandering. Realignment, of course, isn't a juggernaut that lifts one party and obliterates the other. Democrats

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remain strong in urban areas, the Northeast, much of the West Coast, and college towns. But nationally, they're losing ground. Republicans now have governors in 29 states, including the four most populous (California, Texas, New York, and Florida).

The best new evidence of realignment comes from the Pew Research Center for The People and The Press, which has polled in virtually every state. The center's numbers, packaged in a report on the "2004 Political Landscape," show remarkable Republican gains nearly everywhere and particularly since the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. Take the five swing states President Bush lost narrowly in 2000. Since 9/11, Republicans have gained 12 percentage points among voters who identify with them in Iowa, 8 points in Minnesota, 6 points in New Mexico, 5 points in Wisconsin, and 2 points in Oregon. They've also gained 9 points in Michigan and 5 points in California, states Al Gore won handily, and 15 points in Arkansas and 6 points in Florida, both of which Bush won.

Overall, Pew found that Republicans had picked up 5 points in swing states, 4 points in Republican states, and 3 points in Democratic states. Several important states, however, did see Republican losses: Ohio (-1 point), New York (-2), North Carolina (-5), and New Hampshire (-2). But Republicans gained among Latinos, shrinking the Democrats' traditional advantage from 22 points to 14 points.

These party identification numbers should alarm Democrats for two reasons. First, they're bad by themselves. But second, party ID is a lagging indicator. It's the next-to-last thing to reflect a change in voter sentiment. In other words, more Democrats are voting for Republican candidates, but haven't changed their party affiliation. What's the very last thing to change? Voter registration. Millions of Democrats vote Republican without bothering to change their registration. Just look at Kentucky, where the 14-point Democratic edge in voter registration did Democrats no good last week. ♦

It's the War, Stupid

The economy may matter less than you think in the 2004 election. BY JEFFREY BELL

THERE WERE SIGHS of relief in Republican circles last week when the third quarter's economic growth rate was announced as 7.2 percent. But if the central political assumption of the Bush administration is true—that we are in the midst of a world war that is far from over—the relief may prove premature, if not irrelevant.

American voters behave very differently in wartime elections than they do in peacetime elections. The Democrats found that out in November 2002. In that election, by the normal criteria of economic data and domestic issue debate, Democrats had every reason to hope for at least modest gains in the House and Senate. But all year, polls indicated instead a status quo election, and toward the end of the campaign Democrats found themselves on the defensive on the war-related issue of homeland security. The result—historically surprising GOP gains, including the recapture of the Senate—suggested an electorate focused on war, not the sluggish economy or other domestic issues that mildly favored the Democrats.

The course of the Democratic nomination struggle this year suggests that the war-centered mood of the electorate hasn't changed. A candidate mainly associated with opposition to the Bush administration's conduct of the war, Howard Dean, has vaulted from the back of the pack to frontrunner status. The only other contender seemingly able to excite elements of the Democratic electorate, retired general Wesley Clark, has mounted a candidacy that will almost certainly live or die based on his ability to make sense of the war. If voters did not believe us to be in wartime, it's hard to imagine any real interest in a candidate who not only has minimal political experience, but who apparently entered the race having given little thought to the simplest questions of why he is running and what he believes.

For President Bush and the Republicans, strong economic growth would nicely complement a continued GOP advantage on war policy. But if the electorate sees Bush losing his grasp of the war, economic strength will not prevent political setbacks. In 1966 and 1968, Democrats were presiding over the sixth and eighth years, respectively, of the strongest economic expansion in U.S. history. But in those same years, a marked loss in confidence in President Johnson's conduct of the Vietnam war coincided with a 47-seat loss in the U.S. House in 1966 and with a decline in the Democratic presidential vote from 61 percent to 43 percent between 1964 and 1968.

If election history is any guide, the rules are simple. If America sees itself at war, war-related issues trump domestic issues when the two are in conflict. If a role reversal takes place—that is, Republicans gain an advantage on domestic issues while Democrats gain the upper hand in the war debate—Bush and his party will be net losers.

One of Bush's chief advantages since 9/11 is that his view of the war has seemed to coincide roughly with

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that of the electorate. He has seen the enemy as protean, resourceful, and crossing the usual sectarian, regional, and ideological barriers. He also sees the enemy as implacable and irredeemably evil. He believes we must put pressure on the terrorists and their rogue-state allies and facilitators all over the world before they come after us to inflict another 9/11, or worse.

Critics of Bush's war policy, who include most of the Democratic elite, see many of our wartime challenges as fundamentally unrelated to each other, or at least analytically separable for purposes of formulating a U.S. response. The extreme version of this approach is the idea that the response to 9/11 should be mainly one of law enforcement—bringing terrorists to justice—and that efforts at regime change almost invariably overreach the bounds of international law and justice.

For example, Democratic elites tend to see the invasion of Iraq as an issue that is separable from the rest of the war on terrorism, perhaps even a diversion from it. They regard the failure to find Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction as a devastating indictment of Bush's decision to invade. A few Democratic strategists have been heard expressing exasperation with the fact that opinion polls taken in the wake of the failure to find the weapons have shown popular support for the invasion largely unchanged. But this is less surprising if the preponderance of voters see the invasion less in legalistic terms than as one element of a Bush strategy of taking the battle to the enemy in a much larger war.

A few Democratic strategists have been heard expressing exasperation with the fact that opinion polls taken in the wake of the failure to find the weapons have shown popular support largely unchanged.

The same spectrum of attitudes can be seen concerning the guerrilla war being waged against the U.S. occupation in Iraq. Democrats who see Iraq as a stand-alone issue regard the intensity of resistance as still another sign that the invasion was misconceived. Their answer,

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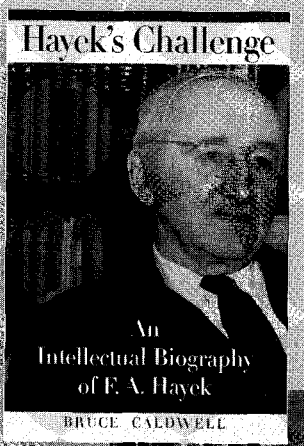

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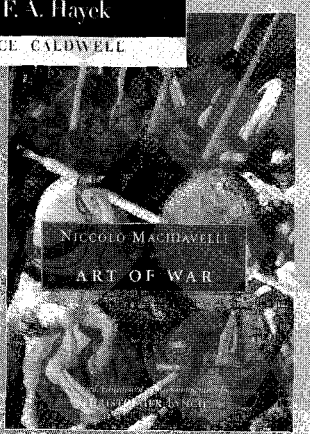

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therefore, is to attempt tacitly to undo the invasion by turning the occupation over to others and minimizing the U.S. role as soon as possible. Someone at the other end of the spectrum might be just as surprised at the intensity of the enemy campaign, but nonetheless see the military struggle for post-Saddam Iraq as a challenging, unavoidable new phase of a complicated world war. In one way, the escalating violence reinforces the Bushite analysis of Iraq as one battleground in a global war that is far from over.

The intensified resistance to our occupation of Iraq is indeed a crisis point in the war debate, if only because these are the first politically significant military setbacks suffered by the Bush administration since 9/11. For the first time, Bush administration voices—and not just the usual suspects in the State Department and CIA—can be heard implying that rapidly phasing down our Iraq effort—in the Vietnam-era phrase of George Aiken, declaring victory and going home—might be the political path of least resistance. Another sign of uncertainty is the seeming willingness of the White House to pursue amicable negotiations with Iran at a time when that country has apparently tolerated the establishment of a new base for al Qaeda within its eastern border.

But if the president's view of this as a vast, unfinished world war is still the view of most voters, attempts to wish away unpleasant realities will come to grief. Little more than a year ago, key Democrats were betting that voters were focused not on the war, but on issues like prescription drugs. Everything that has happened in the Democratic party since tells us that they will not repeat that mistake. It would be ironic if in the months ahead, it is Republicans who find themselves hoping that 2004 will be a peacetime election. Under just about all foreseeable circumstances, American voters are unlikely to agree. ♦

Underwhelming Force

What the Pentagon's troop rotation plan tells us.

BY TOM DONNELLY

THE PENTAGON'S "PLAN" to reduce troop strength in Iraq from the current 132,000 to 105,000 by next May is not so much a reflection of the military requirements of occupation as an expression of inadequate resources: Absent full mobilization (a new military draft or something like it), this is all the ground force the United States can muster.

A quick look at the rotation plan—"Operation Iraqi Freedom 2," the Pentagon calls it—shows just how bare the cupboard is. According to the *Washington Post*, "elements" of the 1st Infantry Division, based in Germany, and the 1st Cavalry Division, from Fort Hood, Texas, will form the core of the OIF-2 force, replacing the tank and mechanized infantry forces of the 4th Infantry and 1st Armored divisions and the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment. This will result in only a slight reduction in heavy forces, probably a good idea in itself. There's little need for heavy force, though the armor protection provided by M1 tanks and Bradley fighting vehicles remains quite useful. But as a consequence, the available heavy Army will be tapped—that is, temporarily exhausted and in need of time off. The next heavy unit to rotate to Iraq is the 3rd Infantry Division from Fort Stewart, Georgia—which led the march to Baghdad and has only recently returned home.

The OIF-2 force will also include the Army's only "Stryker" brigade, based at Fort Lewis, Washington. The Stryker is like an armored car, lighter and less heavily armed than a tank or a personnel carrier. It also happens to be the Army's only significant modernization initiative in two decades. While the Stryker will be easier to operate than tanks and Bradleys, it lacks protection against the ubiquitous rocket-propelled grenades favored by Iraqi insurgents. In Afghanistan, the Soviets quickly learned that these sorts of "medium-weight" vehicles can be deathtraps in ambushes. Also, for budgetary reasons, the Stryker lacks the relatively modest firepower of the Marines' Light Armored Vehicle. And even if the Stryker brigade proves successful, its triumph will be difficult to build on since there aren't any similar units to rotate into its place.

Additional light infantry will be provided by a brigade from the 25th Infantry Division, based in Hawaii. Substituting for the 82nd Airborne, the brigade unfortunately lacks the 82nd's supporting forces, particularly its helicopters. Nor is there any Army equivalent for the 101st Airborne, which will be sorely missed when the division returns to Fort Campbell, Kentucky, this spring. Its fleet of helicopters gives it extraordinary mobility, allowing it to cover almost the entire northern half of Iraq. Also, the 101st has done an especially good job of adapting to the post-combat mission. Its primary headquarters, the city of Mosul, is the poster child for Iraqi reconstruction.

Twenty thousand troops from the 1st Marine Division at Camp Pendleton, California, are returning to Iraq, even though many of them just arrived home. They're heading to the "Sunni Triangle," northwest of Bagh-

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dad, the hottest hot spot around. The Marines, too, have received high marks for shifting into peacekeeping mode. Too bad they plan to do only their usual six-month rotation cycle—the traditional length of Marine sea-duty "pumps." They'll be changing out twice as often as their counterparts—in many cases exiting just as commanders begin to really understand the local area.

By far the most controversial element of Rumsfeld's rotation plan is its increasing reliance on reserves. This week, about 37,000 Army and 6,000 Marine reservists were alerted for an 18-month call-up to active service and told to expect to spend as much as twelve months total in Iraq. While the size of the Iraq force is being scaled back, the reserve slice of the pie is increasing from 28,000 to 39,000—nearly 40 percent of the projected total. In addition to contributing logistics and combat support, reservists will provide a significant presence among combat units with three Army National Guard brigades from North Carolina, Arkansas, and Washington state.

In a way, the Bush administration, Rumsfeld especially, deserves credit for making this difficult decision. Lyndon Johnson's decision not to call up National Guard units had devastating consequences for the U.S. Army in Vietnam and led to a major negative shift in public opinion. But for all that the reserves can deliver, their basic structure is a relic of the Cold War. Designed for mobilization in the event of another world war, the reserves are one of the least reformed elements of the defense establishment. In Iraq, these units will undergo trial by fire. Not only will the tours be longer, exacerbating tensions in families, hometowns, and workplaces, but the duty is far more dangerous than, for example, the Balkans missions of the 1990s.

Many other problems seem likely to attend the execution of the rotation plan. Rotating large forces is dangerous. The increase in convoy traffic in Iraq will increase opportunities for roadside bombings. Rotation also promises to be time-consuming. And, as previously mentioned, much hard-won experience will be lost in the handovers.

Rotation will begin at the same time as the American primary season and will last about as long. So, just as the winds of politics really pick up, decisions on how to provide for the next rounds of rotation (OIF-3 and OIF-4) will be made. The preferred course will likely be to simply extend

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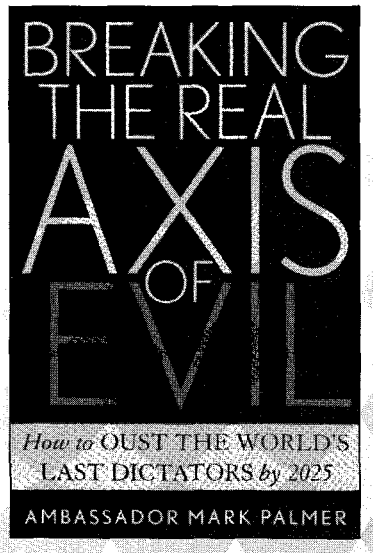

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our current underwhelming commitment in Iraq. Our military strategy will continue to be determined by force-structure decisions made decades ago. After all, the Defense Department still refuses to accept the connection between Iraq and the larger war. It also pretends to believe that the current level of operations is just a temporary spike when it clearly marks the beginning of a new norm.

Last week Sen. John McCain observed, "The simple truth is that we do not have sufficient forces in Iraq to meet our military objectives." Noting the rising number and increasing sophistication of guerrilla attacks and the pitfalls of hasty "Iraqification," McCain tried to tell the Pentagon and the president what senior military leaders say in private, but are too cowed to say out loud.

If the mission in Iraq does not soon become a driving force for transforming the U.S. military and, in particular, the U.S. Army, then the promise to "do what it takes" in Iraq will have meant very little. What it takes is more soldiers, now and for the future. ♦

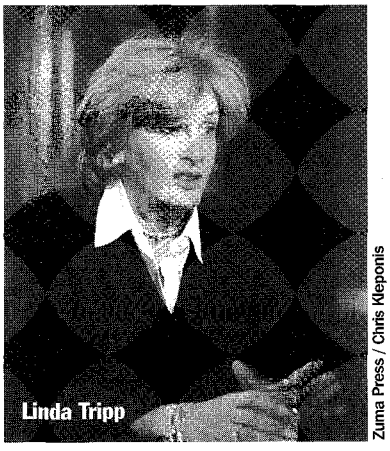
Linda Tripp's Vindication

A Clinton scandal reaches its end.

BY JAY NORDLINGER

LINDA TRIPP—remember her?—is back in the news, with a bit of vindication. The Defense Department will pay her $595,000. It will also give her a retroactive promotion and retroactive pay. Why? Because the Clinton Pentagon played a nasty trick on her, and violated the Privacy Act in so doing. Tripp sued, and has won this settlement.

What happened, back then? It is a tale with many twists and turns, but I'll provide the briefest of summaries.


Linda Tripp

Zuma Press / Chris Kleponis

In March of 1998—two months after the Lewinsky affair exploded—Jane Mayer, a reporter for the *New Yorker*, acquired a valuable piece of information: Linda Tripp, Monica's one-time confidante, had been arrested for larceny as a teenager. So Mayer called up her old friend Kenneth Bacon, who was Pentagon spokesman. Got a question for you, she said. How did Tripp answer Question 21, Parts A and B, on Form 398 (a highly confidential security questionnaire)? This was the question dealing with prior arrests. Bacon, in a comically flagrant violation of the Privacy Act, moved heaven and earth to make sure that the reporter got her answer—on deadline.

Tripp had not indicated an arrest, and it looked like she was in big trouble. But the "arrest" turned out to be a mix-up having to do with a juvenile prank (perpetrated against her), and it was Ken Bacon who was in big trouble. The Pentagon's inspector general, Eleanor Hill, launched an investigation, and in about two seconds determined that, of course, Bacon and his deputy Clifford Bernath had violated the Privacy Act. She referred the matter to Janet Reno's Justice Department, which sat on it for two years, then refused to prosecute. So Tripp had to lodge suit herself.

While covering this story, I made a couple of points, repeatedly. First, Charles Colson reminded me that it was exactly this type of offense to which he had pleaded guilty back in 1974. Colson had leaked Daniel Ellsberg's FBI file to the Copley Press, when Ellsberg was a witness in the Pentagon Papers case and a thorn in the Nixon administration's side—just as Tripp was a thorn in Bill Clinton's side. Colson, as you know, went to jail. The special prosecutor, Leon Jaworski, rejoiced that Colson's plea had set a precedent: No more smearing, of this kind, in this way.

Second, I and others made reference to Passportgate (talk about ancient history). This was the incident in the 1992 presidential campaign in which officials in the Bush

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State Department rooted through Governor Clinton's passport files—and those of his mother. In his first press conference as president-elect, Clinton declared, "If I catch anybody doing it, I will fire them the next day. You won't have to have an inquiry or rigmarole or anything else." Oh, well.

A couple of great questions have always hung over this little case. First, who tipped off Jane Mayer? She said Linda Tripp's ex-stepmother. (Ah, yes, there was a stepmother—an ex-stepmother!—in this case, and, in my opinion, a wicked one.) A lot of us were suspicious, casting our thoughts toward the White House: Sid Blumenthal, Harold Ickes, Bruce Lindsey, and the rest of that merry band. In a deposition, the chief recordkeeper in the White House testified that the White House counsel's office had requested "anything and everything that we might have in our files relating to Linda Tripp." Sure.

The other question is: Did Ken Bacon act on his own (that is, release the information all by his lonesome, on his own initiative)? He said yes. Others said, essentially, "Oh, come on."

In the Lewinsky era, liberals forgot a number of things. They forgot their feminist lessons, and they forgot their Watergate lessons. Tripp was ridiculed, even vilified, for her looks, which were sub-Hollywood. Even today, these comments make for painful reading. Tripp herself said that she had been ridiculed "in a manner so mean and so cruel that I pray none of you is ever subjected to it." She later had dramatic cosmetic surgery, paid for by sympathizers.

As for the Watergate lessons, you're not supposed to, like, play dirty tricks, with confidential files, etc. You know?

But all such lessons went out the window when the first rock 'n' roll president had to be defended. Linda Tripp, the taper of Monica, was always an ambiguous figure, but the Clintonites and their supporters wouldn't let her be: She was pure villainess. They cried, "Friends don't tape friends!" The other side cried back, "Friends don't pressure friends to lie, and to break the law!"

I believe that Tripp was a patriot who, when she got a job in the White House in 1990, was thrilled to death. And when the Clintons and their people came in, she was sickened. She hated adultery, she hated lies, and she did what she thought necessary to protect herself. Throughout those Monica days, she was basically the only one who told the sorry truth, who never spun, and who never, ever, changed her story. Betty Currie, Vernon Jordan, Blumenthal, and the rest of the crew—including the president himself—"adjusted" with the daily circumstances. Not Tripp.

She is now reported to be battling cancer, and her prospects for future employment are uncertain. Interestingly, part of her deal with the Pentagon is that she be permitted to apply once more for federal jobs. For the moment, however, she can enjoy her measure of vindication. Years ago, one of her lawyers said, poignantly, "Despite Linda Tripp's unpopularity, the law should protect her." Yes. ♦

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Vladimir Putin's Grand Strategy

. . . for anti-democratic regime change in Russia.

BY MICHAEL MCFAUL

IN THE BARRAGE OF COMMENT on the recent arrest of Yukos oil tycoon Mikhail Khodorkovsky, much attention has been paid to Khodorkovsky's political activities and to Russian president Vladimir Putin's brand of crony capitalism—but the essence of the scandal lies deeper. The imprisonment of the richest man in Russia has to do with more than the parliamentary elections coming up in December and the greed of second-tier KGB officers who think they got less than their share of the spoils in the 1990s. Rather, the move to eliminate Khodorkovsky as a political and economic force is part of an unfolding strategic plan, whose goal is a regime neither accountable to the people nor constrained by autonomous political actors. The author of this blueprint for dictatorship is Putin. And to date, it is succeeding.

One reason it is succeeding is that few in the West can see it. Each stage of its realization has been clouded with controversy, subject to conflicting interpretations, its actors decked in gray rather than black and white. As a result, observers have resisted connecting the dots of a systematic plan to roll back democracy. Many—including me—hoped for better. Gorbachev failed. Yeltsin disappointed. Surely the Russian people and their friends in the West wouldn't be wrong a third time? Other observers had an economic or geostrategic interest in casting Putin as above the fray. Today, however, it is naive to ignore the man's strategic vision or fail to marvel at the speed of its accomplishment.

The project began in Chechnya. For those who aspire to make the Russian state feared, respected, and "great" again (the *derzhavniki*), like former KGB officer Putin, the anarchy in Chechnya after the withdrawal of Russian troops in 1996 was an embarrassment and a testament to Russia's weakness. When the fanatic Chechen commander Shamil Basayev and his Saudi sidekick, Khattab, moved into neighboring Dagestan in 1999 to liberate the Muslim people of the Caucasus, they gave Putin the perfect pretext for sending Russian troops back into Chechnya.

But the attempt to reassert Russian control over the breakaway province would have happened under Putin with or without that invitation. The rape, pillage, murder, and destruction of civilian property by Russian soldiers reveal how little value Putin assigns to the protection of individual human rights. Unapologetic, he worries about the state, not about the individual.

Next came the destruction of the Russian oligarch Boris Berezovsky, the man perhaps most responsible for bringing Putin to power, first as prime minister in 1999 and then president in 2000. It was Berezovsky who masterminded the transition from Yeltsin to Putin, who built from scratch Putin's party, United Russia, and who wielded his control of Russian national television to neutralize Putin's only potential rival in the 2000 presidential election, former prime minister Yevgeny Primakov. Berezovsky is no democrat. But he was an independent political force, and so had to be eliminated. Today, Berezovsky lives in London.

Up next was television. When Putin came to power, only three networks had the national reach to really count in politics—ORT, RTR, and NTV. By running Berezovsky out of town, Putin effectively acquired control of ORT, the channel with the biggest national audience. RTR is still 100 percent owned by the state, so it was even easier to tame. Controlling the third channel, NTV, proved more difficult, since it was in private hands. But the anarchy of the early 1990s gave Putin and his lieutenants a treasure trove of compromising material on anyone who did business back then. In 2000, federal authorities filed charges against NTV's principal owner, Vladimir Gusinsky, who eventually lost his property and now shuttles between Spain, the United States, and Israel, never Russia. NTV's original team of journalists tried to make a go of it at two other stations, but eventually failed. Today, the Kremlin *de facto* controls all national television in Russia.

Next came the regional barons. In the 1990s, governors of *oblasts* (administrative units roughly comparable to states) and presidents of republics acquired significant political autonomy. To reassert Moscow's dominance, Putin created seven new supra-regional executive authorities whose mandate is to enforce his policies at the regional level. He then emasculated the Federal Council, Russia's closest approximation to the U.S. Senate, by removing governors and heads of regional legislatures from its membership. Under the new system, Putin effectively appoints most senators, making the Federal Council a rubber stamp for Kremlin policies. To dispose of really troublesome regional leaders—those slow to submit to Putin's authority—federal authorities have rigged elections.

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Disqualification of candidates from the ballot on technicalities has been their means of choice—for example, in Kursk Oblast, Ingushetia, and Chechnya. Most recently, Putin's aides have resurrected "party" politics in the regions by inviting/coercing regional executives to join Putin's party, United Russia. This new party, built in no small measure on the remnants of the old Communist party of the Soviet Union, is expected to provide the Kremlin another institutional mechanism for controlling regional politics.

So after the oligarchs had been tamed, the regional leaders reined in, and television seized, who was left to defy the president? Mikhail Khodorkovsky. In contrast to Berezovsky, Gusinsky, and some of the rebellious regional bosses, Khodorkovsky seemed an unlikely challenger to the Kremlin's power. For the first years of Putin's reign, he did as he was told. When Putin warned the oligarchs to stay out of television, Khodorkovsky complied. When the Kremlin asked him to provide money to Grigory Yavlinsky's party, Yabloko (as a reward for Yavlinsky's good behavior in the hostage crisis in downtown Moscow last year), the billionaire did as he was told.

But somewhere along the way, Khodorkovsky began to show signs of independent thinking and political ambition. Perhaps the final provocation was his suggestion in the spring of 2003 that Russia needed a parliamentary democracy rather than a presidential republic. Perhaps it was his pledge to Putin that he would make sure the presidential transition in 2008 (at the end of Putin's second term) went smoothly. Such statements were in direct defiance of Putin's plan to create a political system that he alone controlled and that he alone would decide how to change. Khodorkovsky had to go.

When considered in isolation, each of the steps in Putin's plan can be interpreted as something beside democratic backsliding. The government in Chechnya did not work; terrorists were and are active there. Berezovsky and Gusinsky have many skeletons in their closets. Some of the regional barons Putin has reined in were behaving like tyrants in their fiefdoms. Khodorkovsky is no Sakharov. And, more generally, everyone believes that Russia needs a more effective state if its market economy and democracy are to develop further.

Vladimir Putin

But when analyzed together, these events are clearly linked: All tend toward the weakening or elimination of independent sources of power. Khodorkovsky's arrest was not *only* a triumph of the guys with the guns (the *siloviki*) over the guys with the money ("the family"). Nor was it *only* an incident spurred by personal rivalry and private greed. Rather, it was the execution of the latest phase of a grand strategy for regime change in Russia—autocratic regime change. And the master strategist is not Igor Sechin or Viktor Ivanov, both longtime KGB associates of the president now working for him in the Kremlin. It is Putin himself.

The group of people in Russia who understand most clearly how the dots connect are the same people who fought the last dictatorship in Russia. Last week in Moscow, at a gathering of human rights activists—some of whom had logged years in the Soviet camps—delegates passed resolutions denouncing the war in Chechnya and the arrest of Mikhail Khodorkovsky, spelling out the relationship between these two events. Although they lack the power to stop Putin's plan, they have the clarity of mind and courage of conviction to speak the truth about the rise of dictatorship in Russia.

Shouldn't we as well? In his meeting with President Putin at Camp David last month, President Bush attributed to Putin a vision for his country that these Russian human rights activists would not recognize. Bush said, "I respect President Putin's vision for Russia: a country at peace within its borders, with its neighbors, and with the world, a country in which democracy and freedom and rule of law thrive." The evidence for this vision does not exist. The evidence for the opposite is overwhelming.

Even if there is little Bush can do to stop the erosion of democracy inside Russia, he should at least join Russia's human rights heroes in speaking the truth about Putin's actions. Anything less would make a travesty of Bush's great theme—articulated again, most eloquently, in a major address last Thursday—that "the advance of freedom . . . is the calling of our country." ♦

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Mr. Hwang Goes to Washington

We should hear more from North Korean defectors. BY CLAUDIA ROSETT

IN AMERICA, IT'S A SNAP to find exiles from most of the world's worst tyrannies. Just ask your taxi driver. For everyone from Iranians to Syrians, Chinese to Liberians to Uzbeks, America serves as the Grand Central Station of democratic dissent, a crossroads for outspoken dissidents from around the globe.

But not for North Koreans. Certainly not those who over the past decade have fled Kim Jong Il's famine-wracked, gulag-ridden, bomb-making Hermit Kingdom. Though hundreds of thousands of North Koreans have made a run for it, most of them into China, only a paltry 3,000 or so over the past decade have officially received asylum anywhere—and almost all have been shunted by the democratic world to South Korea. There, under the "sunshine" policy propounded in the late 1990s by former president Kim Dae Jung, and carried forward by his successor, President Roh Moo Hyun, they have been muffled.

Refugees and defectors who have the best insight into the workings of North Korea have been largely discouraged from telling the world anything that might offend Pyongyang, or derail the East Asian version of that perennial fiction known as the peace process—currently, in North Korea's case, called "the six-way talks," with a first round held this past August. Today, U.S. policy toward North Korea entails the pursuit of yet more six-way talks, in which the United States, South Korea, and Japan, in the company of China and Russia, propose to badger, bribe, and "contain" North Korea's Kim into dropping his nuclear bomb program—despite the abysmal failure of President Clinton's similar tack in the 1990s.

So, when North Korea's top-ranking defector, 80-year-old Hwang Jang Yop, made his maiden voyage from Seoul to Washington last week, there was a lot of nervous curiosity on all sides about what he might finally choose to say.

Hwang, who spent decades close to Kim Jong Il, defected to South Korea in February 1997. Since then he has lived under virtual house arrest in Seoul, so closely guarded—for his own safety, say South Korean officials—that few Americans had ever met him.

Prying Hwang from South Korea's grip was an ordeal involving six years of repeated efforts by Suzanne Scholte, president of the private Virginia-based Defense Forum Foundation, which arranged and hosted his trip. A sheaf of invitations sent by assorted congressmen in 2001 was not enough. It took forays to Seoul, months of palaver, and numerous false starts before South Korean and U.S. authorities agreed to let Hwang perform the simple act of walking onto a plane bound for Washington. When Hwang finally arrived here, on October 27, he was limited to one week on the ground, accompanied at almost every step by South Korean security agents—whether guards or minders, take your pick.

But once Hwang got to America, he spoke his mind. His unequivocal message as he made the rounds in Washington was that there should be no aid, no security agreement, no new deals: "To solve the problem of North Korea," he said, "it is required to abolish the Kim Jong Il dictatorship, and democratize North Korea."

This was Hwang's punchline as he went calling on Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz, Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage, senators Sam Brownback and John McCain, Rep. Chris Cox, and the House Policy Committee. This was the line that topped Hwang's prepared remarks at a press lunch on Capitol Hill, attended by some 350 people, to whom he explained, speaking through an interpreter, that in North Korea, Kim is the center of power, a despot who sees himself as "brilliant" because "he is getting all this aid without having to provide reciprocity." Deploring the starvation of millions under Kim, and warning, with regard to Kim's nuclear stash, that "people do not develop warheads to use them as toys," Hwang concluded: "There should be a severing of aid from outside. That should bring about the collapse of the North Korean regime." Specifically, he stressed that "China is the lifeline of North Korea," and "we need to sever the tie that China has with North Korea. Once that tie is severed, the collapse of North Korea would be sooner."

In a conversation with Rep. Cox, who managed to keep Hwang's guards out of the room, Hwang got even more specific. As Cox described it to me in a phone interview afterward, Hwang said that Kim commands the total loyalty of only about 300 people at the top of North Korea's pyramid of power. Below that there is widespread dissatisfaction. Hwang further suggested that if North Korea could be cut off from China, Kim would not start a war on his own.

All this ought to be of serious interest to a Bush administration still tilting toward Clintonesque attempts to contain and appease North Korea's Kim. It's a signal improvement that Hwang finally got his week in Wash-

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Hwang Jang Yop

Reuters Photo Archive / Hyungwon Kang

Famine victims, about 6 years old

WFP / Susan North, courtesy of World Vision

ington. The big question, not yet clear, is how much of his message registered before he was flown back to Seoul.

It is of course prudent to weigh the words of defectors, to question their memories and motives. Hwang was derided, perhaps unintentionally, in a *New York Times* article heralding his trip, which described him as someone who "proudly clings to his status as North Korea's highest-ranking defector" (as if he had a choice). An article on *Slate* denounced him as a would-be Ahmad Chalabi (as if opposing monstrous tyranny were a fault). And everything Hwang had to say bumps up against a White House trying to defer any confrontation till after the 2004 election, and a State Department still prone to assume that signing paper agreements with Pyongyang, Clinton-style, will somehow persuade Kim to give up his deep passion for plutonium.

In sorting all this out, it would be a big help to hear firsthand from a lot more North Korean defectors. During Hwang's week in Washington, I got a taste of what that could be like, at a breakfast hosted by former congressional staffer and North Korea expert Chuck Downs at his home. Hwang was not there, but three North Korean defectors who work with Hwang in Seoul and who traveled with him dropped by, with time to spare. Over coffee and cakes, these three relaxed enough to spend four hours chatting, with the help of an interpreter, about their lives in North Korea, and why and how they escaped.

One of them, Kim Seong Min, a dapper writer who once cranked out odes glorifying Kim Jong Il, and who defected in 1996, explained that for five years he listened in secret to South Korean radio broadcasts—during the pre-sunshine era. This information from outside, plus seeing the bodies of famine victims stacked 10-deep, like cordwood, covered with lice, at North Korean railroad stations in the mid-1990s, persuaded him to try to escape. He faced a terrible, risky journey via China; it took three years before he finally made it in 1999 to safety in South Korea. Kim Seong Min, like Hwang and the other two defectors at that breakfast, was definite that the root of the problem is Kim Jong Il: "He has to go."

Hearing directly from those who have escaped North Korea is rather different from nodding to the nuanced hum of diplomats discussing elaborately unworkable safety deals and six-way talks. It is certainly different from perusing the perfumed pages of *Vanity Fair*, where former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, in the September 2003 issue, recalled her meeting three years ago in North Korea with Kim Jong Il—"an intelligent man, who knew what he wanted"—and yearned for another peace deal with Pyongyang.

Senator Brownback has been mustering support for a bill that would make it easier for North Korean escapees to come to this country, instead of consigning almost all to the smothering embrace of Seoul. And Rep. Cox has issued a public invitation to Hwang to come back soon and stay longer, something a number of Hwang's contacts here say he'd like to do. This leaves us with the question of why the Bush administration—which so aptly named Kim a charter member of the axis of evil—has left to a few members of Congress and a private citizen the matter of wrestling for years to give Americans a chance to hear from those who best know North Korea. In this, the United States itself has been a hermit kingdom. It's time to fix that. ♦

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Where's the Beef From?

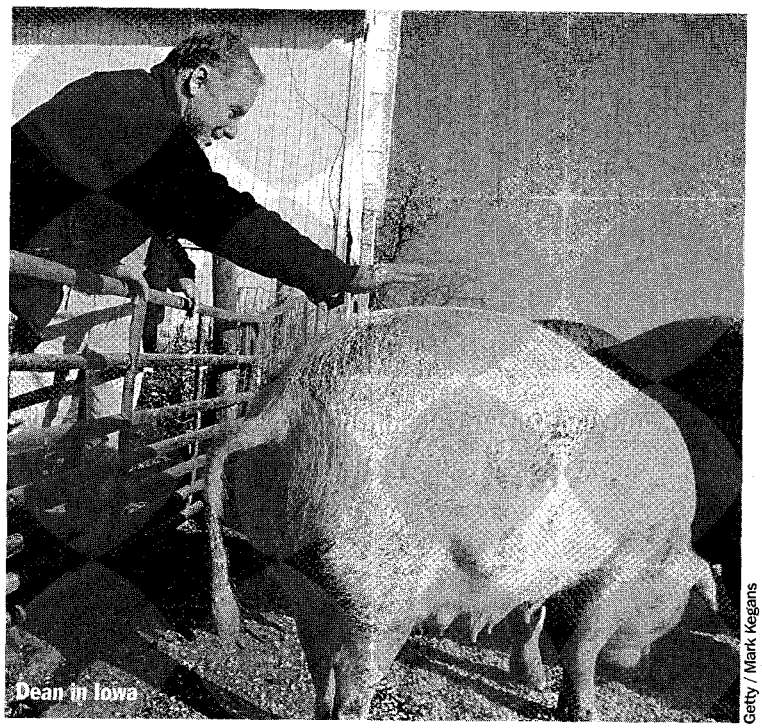
Howard Dean's agriculture plan.

BY DAVE JUDAY

DEMOCRATIC FRONTRUNNER Howard Dean is going for broke. Not content merely to do respectably in Iowa, as other New Englanders seeking the White House have done in the past, he is the only one of the nine Democratic presidential candidates to have campaigned in every single county in Iowa. What's more, unlike all his rivals, he has unveiled a highly detailed agricultural platform.

Dean's farm policy blueprint is all that you'd expect from the former governor of Vermont, a state whose biggest agricultural processor is Ben and Jerry's—it's populist, tinged with an environmental agenda, and very anti-corporate. Above all else he puts the meat-packing industry in his crosshairs. For example, Dean promises to interpret authority under the 1921 Packers and Stockyards Act "to take aggressive action" against meatpackers who don't offer farmers what the Dean administration might consider a fair price for hogs and cattle. Remember Hillary Clinton's cattle futures trading profits? There'll be none of that under President Dean. Market ups and downs—even those based on fundamental changes in supply and demand—will give way to government-managed "fair markets."

Dean also wants a national ban on any slaughterhouse owning livestock. As trifling as it seems amid the big issues of our day, Dean, in contemplating his run for the White House, has given considerable thought to the unlikely question: Who in America should be able to own a cow or a pig?



Dean in Iowa

Getty / Mark Kegans

At issue is the practice of some meatpackers of securing a cattle supply prior to slaughter by buying the livestock or contracting with farmers. The packers do so in order to be assured of the livestock's quality and, in some regions, to be assured of a sufficient quantity of cattle to keep their processing plants operating efficiently. Likewise, in the pork sector, many producers and meat processing plants transact business via multiyear contracts. So important is the assurance of supply to meatpackers that they often pay a premium over what farmers could receive in cash market sales. Respected Wall Street food industry analyst David Nelson of Credit Suisse/First Boston recently reported that such contracts "have been a positive in excess of [cash] market price."

Meat processing is a volatile, capital intensive, highly regulated, low margin business. Meatpackers find their profits in volume, ensuring that volume through contracts. The current economic system, in other words, already accomplishes what Dean says he wants—a relatively smooth-functioning market that provides some predictability to commodity marketing. Dean just doesn't recognize it. Not unlike Bill Clinton, he's a wonk, lost in the weeds of detail, hoping the government can fine-tune small, routine daily market transactions.

Dean promises to be aggressive in managing imports too, via a country-of-origin labeling mandate on meat. Under this plan, the labels on all meat products must detail where the livestock was born, raised, and slaughtered. U.S. hog producers commonly import "feeder pigs" from Canada, which are raised and slaughtered in this country. Likewise, U.S. cattle producers import a significant number of feeder cattle, which are raised and slaughtered here. In the case of ground beef, the following scenario would not be uncommon: Meat from a Mexican-born, U.S.-raised, and slaughtered cow is blended with meat from a U.S. born, Canadian-raised, U.S.-slaugh-

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tered cow, as well as further blended with some imported frozen lean beef trimmings from Australia or New Zealand. In descending order of predominance by weight, all of that would have to be detailed on the label, like some sort of stamped passport for your hamburger.

Why? Because at the Iowa State Fair Dean said "farmers should be able to enjoy the premium that consumers are willing to pay for quality American products." Consider, however, the intellectual disconnect: If consumers are willing to pay this premium, why is it necessary to establish a government mandate? Keep in mind, there is no prohibition against voluntarily labeling meat as bred, born, raised, and slaughtered in the U.S.A.—as any profit-maximizing company would do if consumers were, in fact, willing to pay such a premium.

Congress passed a country-of-origin labeling proposal as part of the omnibus farm bill in 2002, but after considering the complications in the livestock and meat sector, the House voted to stop the funding for the implementation of the system. That doesn't deter Dean. He *believes* this stuff.

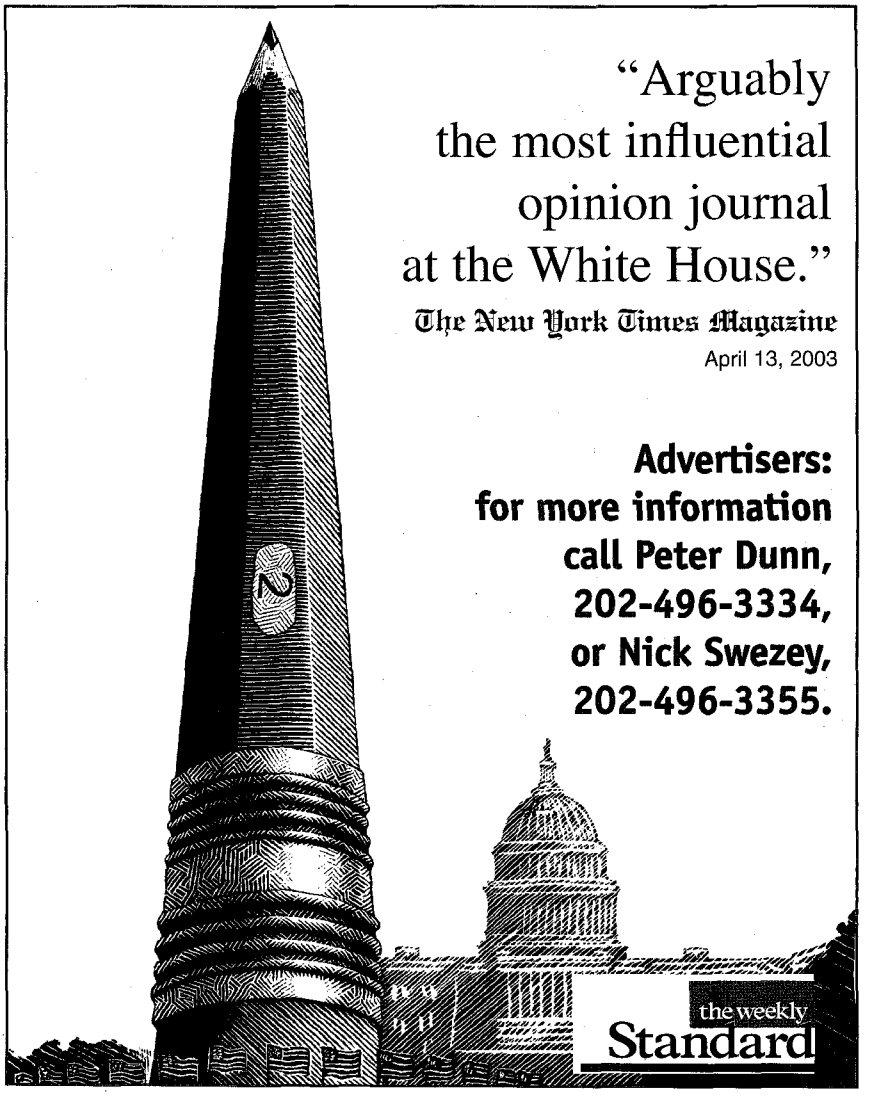
Consider: As governor of Vermont, Dean was one of the architects of the North East Interstate Dairy Compact, a complicated and ambitious six-state statutory framework that established a regional board to regulate the minimum price of milk that dairy processors could offer to pay farmers. The compact was a fiasco. Small dairy farms in Vermont, the ones Dean was trying to save, went out of business at a faster rate the first year of the compact than before it existed. Retail milk prices to New England consumers rose by a total of $136 million.

In response to the economic chaos it created, Congress let the compact die. Now, however, Dean is proposing to resuscitate the heart of the dairy compact—micro-regulation of commodity prices and purchasing contracts and even animal ownership—and transplant it to the meat industry nationwide. The results are predictable.

With his ag plan, Dean continues to promote his *bona fides* as 12-year governor of America's most rural state. But Vermont's rurality (more than 61 percent of the population lives in rural communities) is largely divorced from commercial agriculture—i.e., the kind of agriculture that feeds the more than 98 percent of the U.S. population that does not live on farms and adds an annual $97.3 billion to our nation's gross domestic product. In fact, one of the stated goals of the dairy compact, according to the commission that oversaw it, was to preserve commercially unviable small agricultural scenes as a prop for New England's tourist industry.

This approach, called "multifunctionality" by the Europeans, was at the core of the European Union's ruinously expensive agriculture policy—until this year, when the overwhelming cost forced reforms. Dean's designs on the meat sector—the engine of the U.S. agricultural economy, as it happens—would Europeanize our food and agricultural system.

Agricultural policy doesn't typically get a lot of attention during presidential campaigns, either by candidates or by journalists and pundits. In the case of Howard Dean, however, his heavy-handed agricultural plan—and record—is a window into his political soul and merits closer examination by commentators. Dean's tough meat industry policy should give them a lot to chew on. ♦



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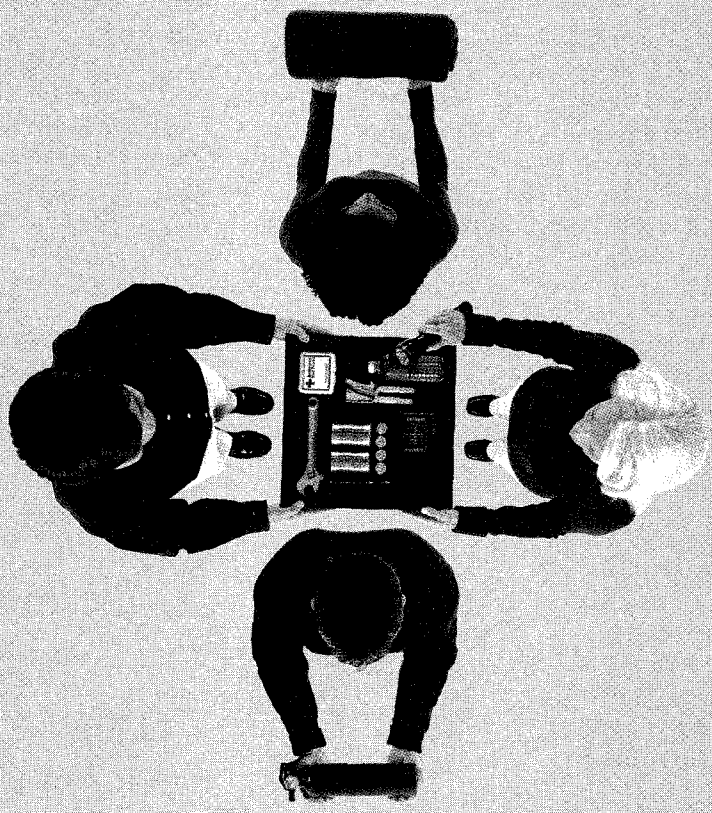

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Who Does Howard Dean Think He Is?

Tall tales and righteous indignation on the campaign trail

By David Tell

Early one evening this past March I found myself struggling for balance in the den of a well-appointed, upper-middle-class home in suburban Bedford, New Hampshire, a half-dozen miles or so southwest of Manchester. I was worried about teetering over because not ten feet away from me Howard Dean had just walked in the door from his car outside, and most of the roughly 100 local Democrats who'd come by the house to get a look at him were also in the den, now jostling—very politely, of course—for position. To make matters worse, the crowd had me trapped directly in the hi-my-name-is handshake path Dean was making toward the kitchen. Mine looked to be the next such greeting. Better I should remain upright for it, I figured.

James Bennett

And better, I further figured, that I not introduce myself under false pretenses, though I wasn't wearing a press badge and could easily have passed for just another guest. So when, moments later, the man was indeed right in front of me, sticking out his paw and saying "Howard Dean," I fessed up—in meekish fashion, privately embarrassed that I hadn't any "serious reporter" questions to ask him—about who I was and where I worked.

Whereupon the former five-term governor of the state of Vermont stiffened backwards a step, screwed up his face, and ostentatiously wiped his palm on the thigh of his pants, like he'd just touched a patch of manure by mistake. "The Weekly Standard," Dean repeated back to me with a tone of incredulity—and only the faintest hint of irony. "You mean *that* Weekly Standard?" I mumbled something and nodded yes. "I actually get The Weekly Standard," he went on. "Yeccch."

It's a funny story, in retrospect, a point of pride even, in a reverse sort of way: How many of us, after all, can claim to have received an unprovoked, face-to-face, personal insult from a leading candidate for president of the United States? For that matter, even at the time, I never seriously thought that Dean intended his show of revulsion to be anything other than funny. He was joshing, I sensed, a conclusion I quickly tried my best to confirm, in order to reassure the several bystanders who were listening in, tittering nervously and obviously not getting the joke, fearing instead that they were witnessing an unpleasant scene: *Why on earth was Gov. Dean treating a perfect*

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stranger so rudely? I would arrange to have the governor relieved of his burdensome subscription first thing tomorrow, I offered, with an exaggerated smile. "No, no, no," he laughed, "it's all right"—breaking the tension, ending our encounter, and moving on to his destination, the kitchen.

Where Dean soon delivered a nifty, quite gripping 20-minute impromptu stump speech in which he described President Bush, Bush's administration and "right-wingers" generally, and the Republican party and its voters more generally still—all of them together, more or less interchangeably—as the moral equivalent of a patch of manure, people whose hands you'd shudder at shaking *for real*. This time Dean did not appear to be joshing one bit. And this time no one nervously tittered about it. Quite the contrary, his audience was transfixed. A hundred Bedford, New Hampshire, Democrats went home that night thinking Howard Dean was *pretty damned good*.

Even then, eight months ago, it was already one of the salient and most striking characteristics of the Dean campaign: The coruscating disdain he habitually expresses, not just for particular ideas he opposes or for the particular people who may fairly be associated with those ideas, but for whole, big chunks of the American population—to which Dean just as habitually ascribes an ill spirit of the deepest and darkest variety. Two months before I met him in New Hampshire, for example, Dean made an attention-grabbing appearance at a Washington, D.C., dinner hosted by the National Abortion Rights Action League, as that group was then still known. There are "many good people" who reject abortion "on moral grounds" and he could "respect them" for it, Dean said that night. "I do not respect the people who defend the throwing of bombs and murders of doctors, however. And some of those exist in our very administration, people who have not stood up against violence" because "they thought it would be better for their political careers if they didn't say too much about it." Otherwise, presumably, the Republican party might lose favor with its important constituency of bomb-throwers and murderers.

Then Dean told the NARAL dinner a little story:

> As many of you know, I'm a doctor. I'm an internist, and I take care of all ages, pretty much five to 105. And one time I was sitting in my office—and it was not unusual for young kids to come and talk to me because I knew the whole family—and one time a young lady came into my office who was twelve years old and she thought she might be pregnant. And we did the tests and did the exam and she was pregnant. She didn't know what to do. And after I had talked to her for a while I came to the conclusion that the likely father of her child was her own father.

"You explain that to the American people who think that parental notification is a good idea," Dean concluded, hot-faced and jabbing his finger at the crowd. "I will veto parental notification!"

These lines generated wild applause, but the anecdote was peculiar. A few weeks later, tipped off by a rival campaign that there might be something fishy about Dean's 12-year-old girl story, Jake Tapper of the online magazine *Salon* asked for clarification and got a terse concession from the governor that he'd omitted what one might think a crucial detail: "All I'm going to tell you is that her father was not the father of her child, it was more complicated than that. But it was adjudicated and someone was severely punished." Around this same time, Jill Lawrence of *USA Today* inquired of Dean whether he didn't think the fatherhood question especially relevant in a parable about parental notification, and Dean got so upset that he threatened to call her editor.

Finally, a few months later, on NBC's *Meet the Press*, Tim Russert subjected Dean to an extended grilling about the Incest That Never Was, and Dean hemmed and hawed his way through what effectively stands to this day as his official explanation: It "didn't make any difference" who was eventually identified as the responsible party. "Of course, we reported the whole situation—turned out the person who had sexually abused her was convicted. Fine." Meantime, though, before the right culprit was caught, Dean *thought* that her father had impregnated the girl. And "under a parental notification law I would have then been required to report that to her family," thus exposing his patient to a risk of retribution. The "judicial bypass" routinely included in parental notification regimes would not have availed him, Dean argued: "There have been judges that say, 'Under no circumstances will I provide certification that this girl should have an abortion.'"

This account of things must have struck most observers as plausible, because there's no record anyone's queried him much about it since. Nevertheless, the story remains a puzzlement. During Vermont's 2001-2002 state legislative session, Dean cited the same 12-year-old girl in support of his threat to veto a parental notification bill that was then before the House of Representatives. Which prompted the bill's chief sponsor, Peg Flory, Republican chairwoman of the Vermont House Judiciary committee, to become alarmed over the possibility that there might be incest victims in the state, minor children, whose abuse was going unreported to *anybody*. This because, as the governor *then* was telling the 12-year-old's tale, he had *not* reported her abuse to the authorities.

On February 5, 2001, Dean gave an interview to this effect on a Burlington radio talk show hosted by a man named Mark Johnson. The show was taped, and a transcript was made, and the key section of that transcript, for present purposes, is available for review on a pro-life

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REUTERS / Jim Bourg

A touchup during a debate in Columbia, South Carolina, May 3, 2003

Internet clearinghouse called *LifeNews.com*, which not too many political reporters look at, apparently. The transcript reads, in part, as follows (with ellipses indicating not omissions, I'm told, but pauses and crosstalk):

> JOHNSON: When you discuss this issue, raise this issue, of when you were a doctor you had a girl come into your office you thought might have been impregnated by her father.
> DEAN: Right.
> JOHNSON: Right, okay. Why, under the current law, would you not have to report that to the authorities?
> DEAN: (Sighing.) Hum, I don't know. I mean, I don't know if I do or not. . . . Those laws were passed long after I left medical practice as far as I know. . . . I am not even sure if doctors are covered, ahhh, for those kinds of instances.
> JOHNSON: Really?
> DEAN: I don't really know. I mean, I don't know the law.
> JOHNSON: I mean, the school nurse has to, a teacher has to . . .
> DEAN: Well, maybe I did, maybe I broke the law, I don't have any idea, I don't even remember exactly when that was. I know it was when I was in the legislature.
> JOHNSON: Okay, well today there are laws on the books that require people to report abuse.
> DEAN: Right, there is . . .

It goes on this way a bit, with a great many ahhs and umms and momentary silences from the governor, but the suggestion is clear throughout: Sometime during the calendar years 1983-1986, inclusive, while he was serving in the legislature but still practicing medicine, Howard Dean treated a 12-year-old girl whom he suspected had been made pregnant by her father. And yet he did not report this horror, a serious crime, to relevant child welfare or police units, as basic decency would surely have required—and, as it happens, then-current Vermont state law very much *did* require.

Peg Flory remembers making inquiries to Vermont state agencies about how many suspected abuses like the one Dean was describing had ever been referred to them. "We couldn't find any," she told me last week, though she stresses that her research was never "about Gov. Dean's story particularly." My own research *has* been particular to Gov. Dean's story, though I wouldn't pretend to call it definitive: a few days' worth of phone calls to Vermont and computer sweeps through newspaper and court-record databases. But so far, at least, I haven't found anything, either—no documentary reference to, or human being who recalls, a statutory rape conviction, during the years in question, involving an adult man victimizing a 12-year-old girl.

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Which, as I say, is a puzzlement. It beggars the imagination, unless you're prepared to leap for a truly awful judgment of the man, that Dean would actually have failed to report such a rape. So why, then, would he have positively invited that awful judgment by falsely confessing such a failure on that Burlington radio broadcast in February 2001? And why, if that confession wasn't false, would he now risk exposure as a fabulist by switching gears and contending the case was successfully prosecuted? And why, if the case was real, would a parental notification law have required him to contact the girl's family to begin with—since he was only her primary physician, and not an abortion provider from whom she was seeking surgery?

Nothing about this story makes sense.

In his delightful new behind-the-scenes book about the early days of the current presidential campaign, *One-Car Caravan*, Walter Shapiro reports that he was "stunned" when he learned, as Dean acknowledged to him, that "the father wasn't the father." And from experiences like these, Shapiro further reports, he at some point decided that Dean has a "preference for powerful narrative over the literal truth." Except that the literal truth of the case at hand cannot be assumed, I don't believe. From the case at hand I believe we can safely conclude, at this point, only that Dean has a preference for powerful narrative, *period*. Powerful narrative designed to teach a lesson—for instance, that people who favor parental notification restrictions on abortion are *monsters*, the sorts of people prepared to countenance a father's rape of his 12-year-old daughter and the pregnancy that results therefrom.

If I read the polls correctly, that's 70 percent of the American public Howard Dean was talking about at the NARAL dinner. And back in the spring, having watched him up close, with all his undeniable intelligence and talent and guile on full display, I could not help but think that he was doing it on purpose, quite self-consciously—and that he would therefore know and wish and be able to *stop* talking this way when the time came. Soon enough a world beyond the Democratic party's hard-core grassroots would begin paying attention. So soon enough, Howard Dean would put away his categorical denunciations of the wayward tens of millions and fashion, in their place, a broader appeal.

But I may have been wrong about that.

The Democratic presidential campaign has these days become a noticeably bitter enterprise. And to a disproportionate extent, Howard Dean is both the object of that bitterness and its source. Sore feelings about him run very high in rival camps and elite Democratic circles generally. And Dean seems none too happy, either.

He is famously irritable with reporters. I recently watched him outright refuse to answer a question from ABC's Mark Halperin about entitlement reform, and then cut Halperin dead: "We're not gonna get into that stuff. Anybody else?" Dean is now openly grumping about the endless series of full-slate, joint appearances he's forced to make with his competitors: "Every time at the end of these debates I wish I never had to do another one." And, lately under increasing and heated assault from those competitors, Dean appears wobblier and less certain of his tactics than in the past—one minute issuing public, plaintive pleas for relief, and the next concocting savage pay-back rejoinders. In a single news cycle on October 28, after the Gephardt campaign had renewed its criticism of Dean for taking "the Republican position" on Medicare, Dean first fairly begged for mercy: "I think Dick has got to stop this. He has got to put his gun back in his holster. . . . One of us is going to be the next president and Dick has got to tone this down." Then, a few hours later, Dean authorized his top strategist, Joe Trippi, to raise the volume to a roar—by launching an incendiary (and apparently baseless) accusation that Gephardt campaign operatives in Des Moines had physically roughed up a Dean aide and called the young man a "faggot."

But the worst trouble by far that Dean has run into this fall, needless to say, involves race relations. There was, for starters, his September 9 boast, during a debate at Baltimore's Morgan State University, that "I'm the only white politician that ever talks about race in front of white audiences." It simply wasn't true, as all the other candidates indignantly pointed out. And the first of them to do so, ominously enough, was the Rev. Al Sharpton, always eager to play the spoiler, who'd already been needling Dean for weeks, and was on national television mocking the frontrunner's "only white politician" remark just minutes after the Morgan State debate was done.

Three weeks later, in what was purportedly a fit of outraged vanity over Dean's endorsement by Jesse Jackson Jr., Sharpton reached for the Doomsday bomb, accusing Dean—at a Democratic National Committee meeting, no less—of promoting an "anti-black agenda." Dean's past "opposition to affirmative action," "current support for the death penalty," and "historic support of the NRA's agenda," Sharpton promised, "will not sell in communities of color in this country."

It was legendary race-baiter Al Sharpton talking, granted. But his bill of particulars was not inaccurate,

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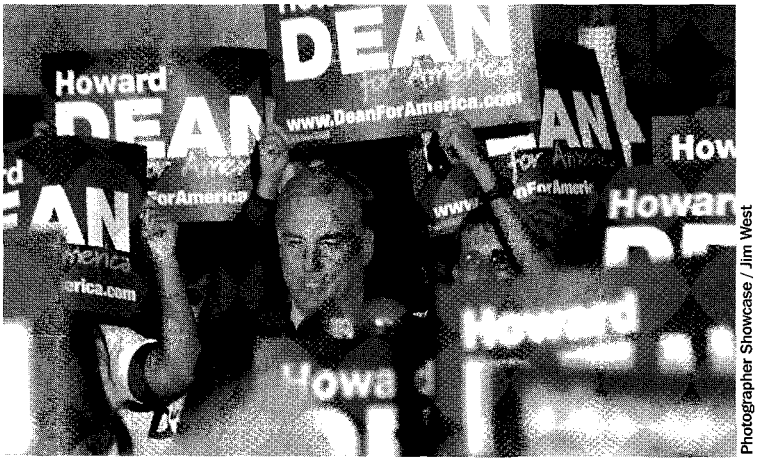
exactly. Dean did once say that he thought preference programs for hiring and admissions should be based not on race, but on class. Dean has abandoned his past opposition to the death penalty—and has yet to produce a truly coherent rationale for his change of mind. And Dean was, until very recently, the proud possessor of a consistent 100 percent rating from the NRA. None of which stuff will do him very much good once the campaign heads into its first, big, post-New Hampshire contest: South Carolina, where half or more of the Democratic primary electorate is black.

Moreover, even had Al Sharpton never said a word—even had Dean not uttered his fabulous gaffe last week about the Confederate flag, which we will come back to in a moment—the former governor of Vermont would still be operating with a structural, race-related disadvantage. His campaign has won a larger body of regular, reliable, and financially generous supporters than any other in the field to date. And it remains the case that very, very few of those supporters are African American.



Photographer Showcase / Jim West

Dean at a rally in Detroit, October 26

There was a candidates' debate in Detroit on October 26, and at 5:30 that afternoon, I showed up at a sunken concrete plaza on the city's downtown riverfront for the scheduled opening of a pre-event Dean rally. This time I was wearing a press badge. Which immediately attracted a small knot of rallygoers who wanted to complain about how campaign volunteers were leaning on them to throw away their handmade anti-Bush signs and carry nice, blue, professionally printed "Dean for America" placards instead.

The volunteers in question then rushed to explain themselves: "We just want a more homogenous look," one of them told me. And that's what they wound up getting, though the signs didn't have anything to do with it in the end. There were something like 200 people at the Dean rally by the time I headed off to get ready for the debate itself. And all but four of them were white—in the middle of an urban jurisdiction whose population is 82 percent black. Stories like these are legion. Not too long ago, a personal appearance by Dean, advertised by his aides as an opportunity "to connect with black voters," drew an almost all-white crowd—at an African Methodist Episcopal Church.

This may well prove a temporary phenomenon, but it is an interesting one. Not so much for why it's arisen. And not so much for the campaign's persistent but awkward and so far unsuccessful efforts to make it go away. "[T]he way you organize in the African-American community is different from the way you organize in the white community," Dean has been known to muse aloud—to a panel of African-American journalists, who must have been amazed to hear it. "You gotta go to the leadership," he told them. "You gotta go to the churches, community leadership."

The whiteness of Dean's movement is interesting more than anything else for the reaction it's inspired in the candidate himself: his repeated, explicit insistence that it oughtn't be happening, that he doesn't deserve it, that it inaccurately reflects what he's about and who he is, even. Though it has caused him nothing but grief, Dean has pointedly refused to back down from that claim to be the "only white politician" who speaks candid racial truths to other white people. At the end of a long, testy, and embarrassing exchange about the matter on ABC's *This Week*, George Stephanopoulos asked him the obvious question: "Now, why not just say, you know, 'Maybe I shouldn't have said it that way?'" And Dean shot back: "Because I think I'm right."

And it's apparent that Dean thinks he's right, that he believes himself unusually well-qualified to serve as ambassador of racial understanding to the rest of white America, because, as he told *Salon*'s Jake Tapper, "I have in some ways a special relationship with the African-American community"—on account of "my college career." Which is to say: "I had two African-American roommates" during freshman year.

This, too, has become a *leitmotif* in the Dean campaign. He says it over and over and over again. He says it to black churchmen whom he's attempting to court. He says it to white reporters when he's trying to convince them that such courtships will bear fruit. And it is a very easy tic to make fun of, to be sure: "I have more than a passing familiarity with the African-American community"; "I did a lot of things on the ground" dur-

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ing the civil rights movement; "I was rooming with two African Americans." For nine months. At Yale.

One cringes.

But at the same time one makes a very grave mistake if one supposes that Howard Dean is anything other than sincere about all this. Race relations clearly matter to him. A lot.

Dean is renowned for his prickliness, and is especially prickly about his family background: The handsome home on the duck pond in East Hampton. The sprawling eleventh-story apartment on Park Avenue in New York. The household help, the boarding school in Rhode Island, the trust fund. Dean hates to be reminded of such stage-setting nonsense. "Where I come from is a lot different than where most people think I come from," Dean griped when George Stephanopoulos asked why he so rarely discussed his childhood. For one thing, Dean offered by way of rebuttal to what "most people think," nobody ever talks about "who I spent my time with during the civil rights movement," a reference, yet again, to his freshman-year roommates. The logic of which reference may seem to be elusive: Why should having black friends at Yale necessarily be so radically at odds with a proper understanding of the life Howard Dean led beforehand?

But there is a logic to it. In less guarded moments, our Howard Dean, "Little Howard" as it devolves he was known in the family, has been somewhat more forthcoming about one aspect of his upbringing: the part played in it by his father, "Big Howard" Dean. "My father was just an enormous personality and there was always a part of me that wanted to please him." Big Howard was a "gargantuan figure," Little Howard has recalled, though he has sometimes done so in slightly more evocative and poignant terms: "I was uninclined to confront my father." Who, from the look of things, took a more than ordinary delight, at least occasionally, in pushing his family around—pretty hard. The *Boston Globe* reports that Big Howard "once gift-wrapped a dead cat, jiggling it as if alive, and handed it to a relative as a birthday present." Har-dee-har-har.

And according to a Dean family friend—the *Globe* story adds, not incidentally—Big Howard "made no bones" whatsoever about the low opinion he had for black people. Little Howard's African-American Yale College roommates—whom he'd gone out of his way to request from the school's housing office—were formally barred from Big Howard's home.

It isn't possible to pull off a straight-up, simple dime-store psychology job on the trajectory of no-longer-Little Howard Dean's adulthood. Life is complicated. African-American roommates or not, the evidence is incontrovertible—he allows as much—that Dean was actually quite miserable his freshman year at Yale, and almost dropped out, only to be talked into returning by his father. But misery is not the emotional aftertaste the experience has left him. "I had known people of different kinds before," he told *Time* magazine back in August, "but I had never lived with people that were so different and it was *wonderful*." Wonderful is not the sort of word Dean nowadays uses to describe East Hampton and Park Avenue, which he seems loath to talk about at all, in fact. "I had two African-American roommates at college," however—whom he will talk about forever, and from contact with whom he clearly believes he acquired some rarefied insight into a better, nobler, correcter way to think and live. Howard Dean says he would like to have conversation about this stuff with other white folks. I, for one, am inclined to believe him.

I am also inclined—it's only a theory—to think Dean the kind of man, by dint of his transformative racial experience, who's attracted to big, dialectical, black-and-white notions, if you'll pardon the expression, about the world's moral-political landscape generally, and about the people who populate it. So of course, if I'm right, Howard Dean would proclaim an intention to canvass for votes among working-class white southerners who didn't go to Yale, and don't know any better, and therefore tend to vote for Republicans. (Some of whom did go to Yale but are nevertheless happy to see 12-year-old girls give birth to their father's children.) Dean would like to have a conversation with working-class white southerners about this Republican problem. And in a moment of laziness—meaning no offense by it, really—of course Dean would refer to his desired conversation partners as "guys with Confederate flags in their pickup trucks." Which is exactly what he hopes they'll no longer be once he's done with them.

At one point during the debate in Detroit, a red-faced Dean announced that so long as he believes it's the right thing to do, he'll "say what I think, and I don't care if 70 percent of the people in this country disagree with me." It's a style that has worked spectacularly well for him so far. He moves from strength to strength—last week deciding that he had a rich enough campaign treasury to reject millions of dollars in free federal matching funds, this week slated to receive crucial endorsements from two giant union internationals.

Still, though, 70 percent of the people in this country is an awful lot of people to get red in the face about if you want to be elected president, isn't it? ♦

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Panting After the Youth Vote

The Democratic candidates make fools of themselves

By Matt Labash

Boston, Massachusetts

French historian Jacques Bainville once said, "The old repeat themselves, and the young have nothing to say. The boredom is mutual." But then, he died in 1936, which means he never got a chance to see the vote get rocked. Rocking. Voting. Like chocolate and peanut butter, they're two great tastes that go great together. It's why kids who are potential voters in the Democratic primary packed historic Faneuil Hall in Boston on Election Night last week for the America Rocks the Vote Democratic presidential debate.

Faneuil Hall once saw Frederick Douglass rail against slavery and Susan B. Anthony thunder for women's suffrage. But on this night, a new chapter was written in its august history when—as the evening's moderator, CNN's Anderson Cooper, put it—it became the place "where America rocks the vote. And dare I say, rocks it pretty darn hard."

Rock the Vote is the ostensibly nonpartisan organization (its president used to head women's outreach for the Democratic National Committee) "dedicated to protecting freedom of expression and empowering young people to change their world." It turned 13 this year, and like most 13-year-olds, it is cocksure, convinced of its righteousness, and eager to tell its old man where to get off. Initially established by the music industry to uphold our forefathers' highest ideals—like the right of 2 Live Crew to sing potty-mouthed lyrics—it has become synonymous with its frequent collaborator MTV, and known for constant jabbering about the need for youth to get out and vote. As an American-flag-swaddled Madonna said in one of the many Rock the Vote public service announcements that have elevated our discourse, "If you don't vote, you're going to get a spankie."

Since its founding, it has run any number of high-profile campaigns. Who can forget how Rock the Vote almost stopped the war in Iraq by releasing, mid-conflict, the Lenny Kravitz song "We Want Peace"? Then there were the recorded get-out-the-vote phone calls from Rah Digga, the prestigious awards bestowed on statesmen like Destiny's Child and Queen Latifah, the Internet form letters members can sign, like the anti-political-intimidation missive that reads, "Dear President Bush, I want you to call off the dogs and stand up for free expression." And how could we omit the new Dixie Chicks-sponsored "Chicks Rock, Chicks Vote!" voter registration campaign, highlighting a new online tool under the tagline, "Print it and sign it, lick it and mail it." (While political sages have no idea how to turn out the elusive 18-to-24-year-old vote, market research shows that young people do like to lick things.)

The very term "youth vote," of course, is a self-canceling proposition. Since the voting age was lowered to 18 in 1972, the young have voted in increasingly smaller numbers than every other demographic—even after a decade of turnout efforts from Rock the Vote and countless youth-fetishizing knockoffs. (In 2000, 54 percent of those over 24 voted, while only 29 percent of those 24 and under did.) These no-shows might be doing democracy a favor. As the National Conference of State Legislatures recently reported, of this age group, 8 in 10 knew the cartoon Simpsons resided in Springfield and 64 percent knew Ruben Studdard won "American Idol," while only 1 in 10 could pick Dennis Hastert's name out of a list as speaker of the House.

Still, in windy panel discussions like the one Rock the Vote and Harvard's Institute of Politics jointly sponsored for reporters before the Faneuil Hall debate, there is no end to the yammering about the kids. According to pundit boilerplate, they are a study in contrasts: apathetic yet involved, optimistic yet cynical, smart yet dumb, technologically savvy but unable to lay hands on the most basic information, young but with old souls.

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It's one of the hazards of trying to define a generational voting bloc, as shown by a recent Institute of Politics study that found this age group is more likely than their elders to give President Bush a positive job rating and to support him in a match-up with a generic Democrat. Ten years removed from college myself, I seem to remember that the only "issues" that unanimously moved my classmates were the need to forgive all student-loan debt and to make medical marijuana available for head colds. This also may be why groups like Rock the Vote—who implicitly embrace what they call "progressive politics," but explicitly strive to move voters by age rather than ideology—struggle. Practicing politics without content is like dancing without music. It can be done, but there's not much joy in it.

Still, that doesn't stop MTV/Rock the Vote types from incessantly scolding candidates that they need to chase youth tail. Since nobody seems to know what young people want, the we-need-to-listen-to-our-youth cries reappear in every election cycle like a bad rash. What the youth have to say, if anything at all, is almost beside the point. As MTV's Walter Cronkite and longtime Rock the Vote collaborator Gideon Yago, himself a twenty-something, says at the pre-debate panel discussion, there is a "need to establish a dialogue, and the importance of this voter bloc." He adds that "politicians are not going out and aggressively trying to establish a dialogue with them," a tragedy, since the young are "profoundly engaged with politics, even if they don't know it." Better, Yago says, to "placate and discuss and engage in a dialogue now, than have us be a major oppositional bloc 15 years from now."

Outside Faneuil Hall, Rock the Vote produces Casey Affleck, Ben's much less famous brother, so that he can register to vote. But either nobody recognizes him or nobody cares. Howard Dean and John Kerry supporters are hip-checking each other and commingling signs so that at first glance it looks like an unruly mob is striving to "Elect John Dean." Here, I grab five Rock the Vote street team members, ranging in age from 19 to 26, and ask them what issues young people want to see addressed. One of them abstains, another says the environment, two say education, and one says defense. It occurs to me that these aren't young-people issues, they're people issues. But it doesn't matter. A dialogue has been established.

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During the debate, another dialogue goes off under the stewardship of Anderson Cooper, whom TV critics frequently mistake for "edgy"—though in fairness to Cooper, it's an easy mistake to make since he shares a line-up with Aaron Brown. Over the last few months, candidates have attempted to make inroads into the youth vote: Howard Dean has identified himself as a metrosexual, John Kerry has gigged with Moby, and Dennis Kucinich has consorted with rappers like Noyeek the Grizzly Bear, picking up endorsements such as "Yo, I love this fool."

Throughout the debate, it's clear that young people like to be pandered to, and politicians like to pander—the perfect marriage. This is evident in the 30-second candidate videos (Wes Clark, never known as the class clown, is actually seen having an earnest discussion about the potential break-up of Outkast, before bumping knuckles with a young voter). But it is more evident in the candidates' dress. While a good portion of the young audience are in coat and tie, Dean comes out with no jacket and rolled-up sleeves. John Edwards wears a coat, but no tie. Joe Lieberman and John Kerry, perhaps feeling overdressed, both ditch their jackets before the debate gets started. By the first commercial break, Edwards loses his jacket and rolls up his sleeves. Later, Al Sharpton sheds his jacket and unbuttons his vest. Wesley Clark, in jacket and black mock turtleneck, looks like he's on his way to a humanities professor party. And Dennis Kucinich, wearing the exact same rig, looks as if Clark's mother laid out his clothes. (Clark, perhaps not wanting to be outdone by Lieberman, Kerry, Edwards, and Sharpton, also ends up ditching his jacket.)

Sharpton and Kerry then clasp hands in what is the first, and it is to be hoped last, soul-brother handshake of this election.

That settled, they get onto the issue young people care about most: antebellum racism. An audience member pounces on a tempest-in-a-teapot, Dean's lazily phrased attempt at outreach to southern voters with Confederate flags on their pick-up trucks (allowing grandstanders Edwards and Sharpton to establish, once and for all, that the Democratic party is no longer pro-slavery). There are plenty of non-youth-vote-type questions, on everything from the Cuban embargo to Iraq. But all the questions that are unorthodox, and could only be asked by Rock the Vote-ish audience members, tend to remind observers how painful it is when presidential candidates try to "keep things real," as Cooper implores them to do. (Even Bill Clinton—who was better than anybody at keeping it real in a fake way—let slip to the kids that his favorite musician was Kenny G.)

During the obligatory pot-smoking question, several candidates seem willing to drink bong-water if it would establish their credentials. When one woman asks which of their fellow candidates they'd most like to party with, Lieberman creeps-out the room by saying, "I hope my wife understands this. I'd like to party with the young lady who asked that question." Sharpton takes it further, saying he'd like to party with John Kerry's wife. Kerry sheds his long-faced Easter Island mask, adopts a self-conscious smile, and says he'd wanted to party with Carol Moseley Braun, but now he'd better stick with Sharpton "so I can keep an eye on my wife." Sharpton and Kerry then clasp hands in what is the first, and it is to be hoped last, soul-brother handshake of this election.

Back in the spin room after the debate, the candidates enter one by one. On a TV platform, Gideon Yago is complaining to Paula Zahn that the candidates failed to "really open up a dialogue." Yet they are willing enough to talk freely about their youth-vote outfits. When I ask Wes Clark what was going through his mind when he showed up in the same clothes as Kucinich, he looks as startled as a possum in the high beams, but regains his composure, and answers, "I thought Dennis Kucinich had excellent taste." When I ask Edwards why he stripped down during the debate, he seems to have trouble keeping it real. "Sometimes, formality . . . can push people away. Especially young people. Sometimes they feel uncomfortable. I want them to feel comfortable."

Outside, I run into a group of middle schoolers from Newton. "You're the children, you're our future, get in there," I say to them, in the interest of establishing a dialogue. They can't get into the party, they complain, because alcohol is being served. The youth issues that concern them most, they tell me, are gay rights and birth control. "It happens every day in our lives," says one 11-year-old girl. I have to admit, I'm taken aback. When I was 11, the only issues I cared about were football cards and *Gilligan's Island* reruns. I hadn't yet formed my political worldview, unlike the junior-high boy who told me, "I like Al Sharpton. He's awesome! He's not, like, boring."

Being not boring is what it's all about. As Rock the Vote president Jehmu Greene says, "Now that we are done rocking the candidates on live television, for the next month we will keep on rolling and build on the energy and excitement . . . with a Rock the Video contest"—in which youths can select their favorite candidate video—the "perfect way to keep the party going." It gives them, she says, "a direct way to provide feedback." Establishing dialogue is, like, a two-way street. ♦

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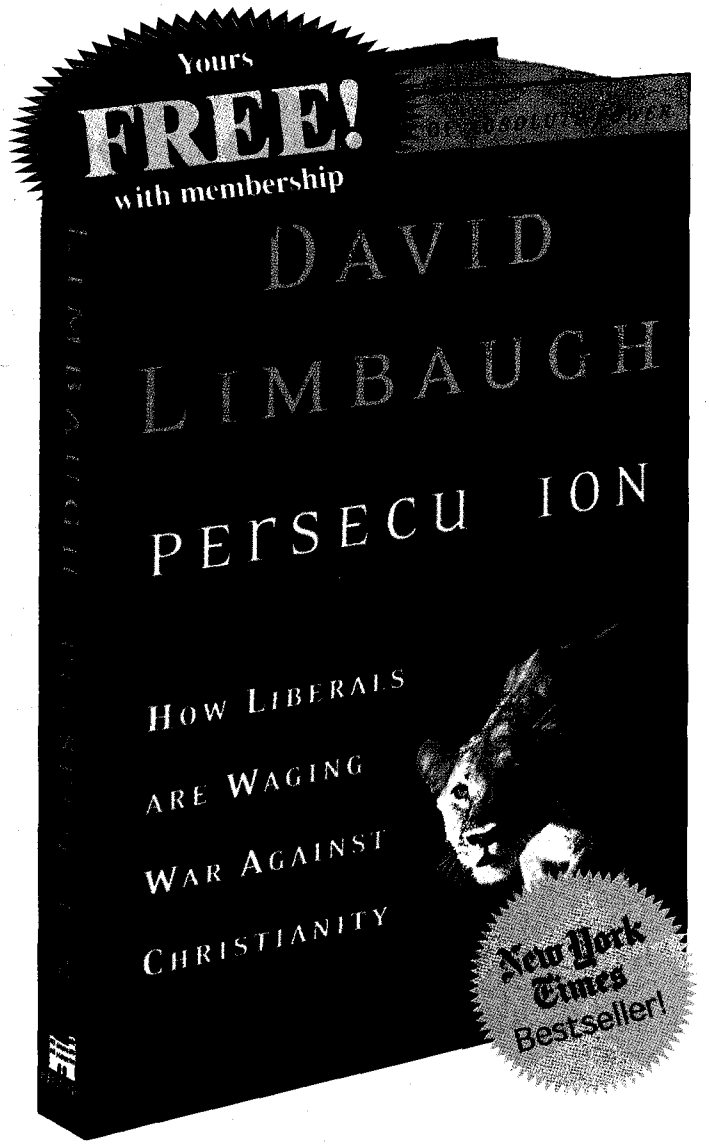
CHRISTIANS PERSECUTED? IN AMERICA?

OPEN YOUR EYES—IT'S HAPPENING RIGHT NOW!



Tolerance might be touted as the highest virtue in our popular culture, but it doesn't often extend to Christians these days. Christians are increasingly being driven from public life, denied their First Amendment rights, and even actively discriminated against for their beliefs.

In **Persecution**, best-selling author David Limbaugh rips apart the liberal hypocrisy that condones selective mistreatment of Christians in the mainstream media, Hollywood, our schools and throughout our public life. Providing details of case after shocking case, Limbaugh demonstrates that the anti-Christian forces now controlling significant portions of our society aggressively target the slightest hint of public Christianity for discrimination, yet encourage the spread of secular values—including "alternative sexuality" and promiscuity. Limbaugh cuts cleanly through this confusion and distortion, exploring the deeply held Christian faith of the Founding Fathers, and showing that Christianity and Judeo-Christian principles are essential—and were recognized by the Founders as essential—to the unique political liberties Americans enjoy.

Persecution is an indispensable tool to help Christians reclaim their right—and duty—to enter the political arena and influence the course of this country. Join the Conservative Book Club and learn more about championing what America is supposed to be about—religious freedom.

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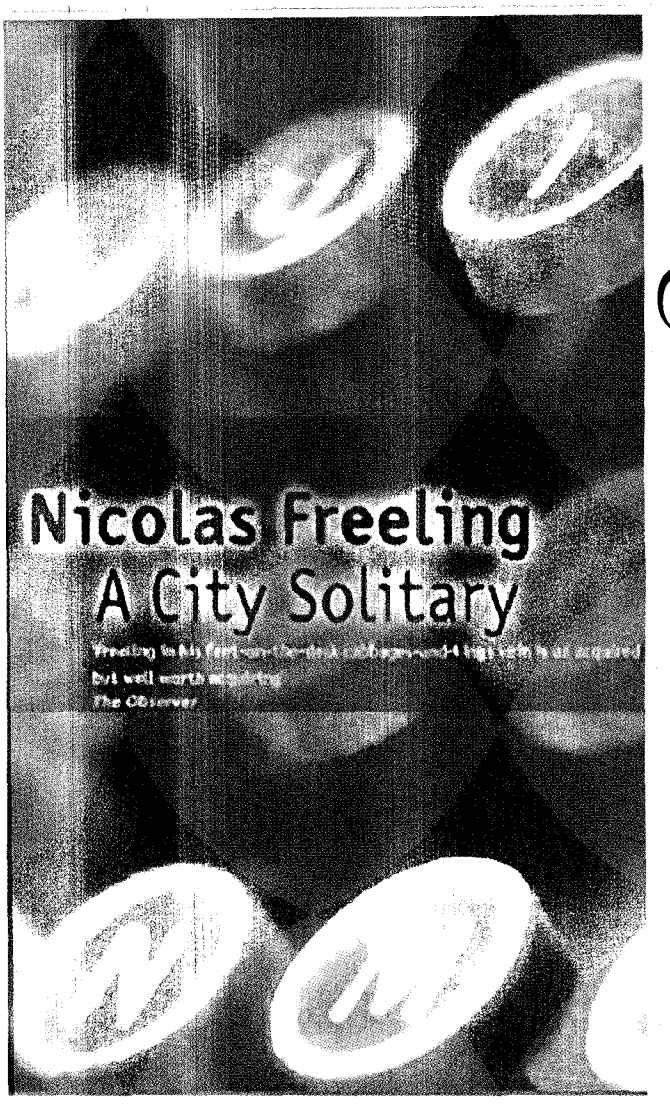
Dutch Treat

Why mystery fans need to read Nicolas Freeling

By Jon L. Breen



The mystery writer Nicolas Freeling made a dreadful commercial decision—and a dubious artistic one—when he killed off his popular detective, Amsterdam police inspector Piet Van der Valk. But is that the complete explanation for why one of the most gifted and original writers of crime fiction has been so forgotten by critics? Even the obituaries after his death this summer at age seventy-six were the kind that finds it more surprising that the man had still been alive than that he had just died.

Freeling produced challenging and distinctive crime fiction for forty years. But after nods to his early mysteries starring Van der Valk—a Mystery Writers of America Edgar, a French *Grand prix du roman policier*, and some recognition from the Crime Writers Association of Great Britain—the award-givers turned their backs. MWA's Grand Master and CWA's Diamond Dagger for lifetime achievement were denied him. Of several lists of the hundred greatest crime novels, only H.R.F. Keating's *Crime & Mystery: The 100 Best Books* (1987) found room for him—and that grudgingly. There is no Freeling companion, no book-length biography, and no critical study. A mystery bookseller told me sales of Freeling's books come about as frequently as leap years.

Few would have predicted such a fate in the 1960s. While working as a cook in an Amsterdam restaurant, the English-born Freeling was accused of stealing food and briefly jailed. During this encounter with the Dutch criminal-justice system, he was interrogated by a detective—and thereby discovered the model for his own Van der Valk. From his first appearance in *Love in Amsterdam* (1962) to his demise in *Auprès de ma Blonde* (1972), the Dutch policeman's cases filled eleven books.

Freeling was contemptuous of typical mystery fiction, and his books often involve nonstandard detective-story plotting. But they are not *anti*-detective stories: The problems the author sets, the detective solves. He wrote what is now called the "literary thriller"—although that has become a nearly meaningless term these days, since it became its own commercial category. Not surprisingly, given his earlier career, Freeling is among the most food-obsessed of mystery writers (although he stops short of including recipes, which Rex Stout did in the Nero Wolfe novel *Too Many Cooks*). In his emphasis on setting the scene, attention to domestic detail, and favoring of verbal conflict and plot movement over explicit violence and physical action, Freeling has more in common with the cozy writers than most in the police-procedural school. His prose can be annoyingly eccentric at times, but more often evocative and eloquent.

Like the admitted model, Georges Simenon's Maigret, Freeling's Van der Valk takes an unconventional approach to police work, exhibits lone-wolf tendencies, is happily married, and is more interested in character than forensics. Van der Valk's blunt speaking style, along with a seeming contempt for Dutch Calvinist values of

A regular writer on mystery fiction for The Weekly Standard, *Jon L. Breen is the winner of two Edgar awards.*

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Nicolas Freeling

conformity, respectability, civility, and order, have hurt his police career, but he is valued for his ability to crack unusual cases, especially those that exploit his linguistic ability and understanding of various European cultures. The Dutch sleuth's cases, whydunits as much as whodunits, often explore his relationship with the criminal, played out in a series of encounters that resemble social chats more than cat and mouse.

For a big-city policeman, Van der Valk is well traveled: Belgium, France, Austria, Germany, Spain, Ireland. Freeling, who lived most of his life on the continent, had a sharp eye for the quirks and oddities of the various nationalities, and he was really more a European writer than a British one. (Most of his rare sports allusions, for example, are to bicycle racing—something you couldn't get the British to follow even if you offered them free beer.)

The Van der Valk novels avoid any set formula. Julian Symons, who celebrated serious studies of criminal psychology, preferred *Criminal Conversation* (1965), in which Van der Valk investigates a doctor suspected of murdering a blackmailer. Keating and the CWA judges gave their nod to *Question of Loyalty* (1963), tracing the double life of a murder victim involved in the smuggling of butter from Holland into Belgium. In both these books, Van der Valk takes the stage at the end to explain the crime. American readers, including the Edgar judges, preferred the heightened suspense and physical action (including the theft of a helicopter from a skiing competition and the serious wounding that would change the course of Van der Valk's career) of *The King of the Rainy Country* (1966). Puzzle-novel traditionalists Jacques Barzun and Wendell Hertig Taylor appreciated *Strike Out Where Not Applicable* (1967), with a wider range of suspects and the classic situation of a murder victim apparently kicked by a horse.

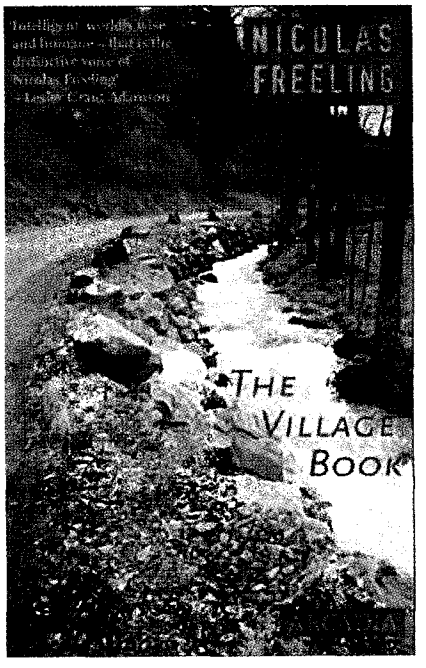
My own favorite is *Double Barrel* (1969), about Van der Valk's undercover investigation of a rash of anonymous letters in a northeast Holland boomtown. He pays repeated friendly visits to the chief suspect, a supposed Jewish refugee. That the man is actually a notorious Nazi is so clearly foreshadowed, few readers will be surprised, but Van der Valk's ethical pondering over whether to turn him in is deftly handled. *The Lovely Ladies* (1971) has an ending more pretentious than profound and may be the worst of the Van der Valks. But even this book is memorable for his sexual encounter with a suspect (unconvincing) and the scene where he confesses, wisely or not, to his wife Arlette (painfully believable).

In the early 1970s, British television extended Van der Valk's fame beyond the printed page, but Freeling couldn't stand prosperity. In *Auprès de ma Blonde*, he struck down Van der Valk much more irrevocably than Conan Doyle disposed of Sherlock Holmes. Now working in the Hague and contemplating retirement to a cottage in France, Van der Valk goes for a walk and is shot from a passing car before the novel's halfway point.

Arlette, who ultimately solves and avenges her husband's murder, would briefly star in her own series of mystery novels. In *The Widow* (1979), now remarried and living in Strasbourg, Arlette opens an advice service, becoming a combination mobile Dear Abby and private eye, but she can't carry a book as her husband did, and the English sociologist Arthur Davidson is not engaging in the supportive-spouse role. After one more novel, Freeling wisely abandoned the series. Van der Valk himself would return for a final bow in *Sand Castles* (1989), a case before his death rather than a resurrection.

Symons believed that Freeling "lost his way as a writer" when he killed Van der Valk. Certainly Freeling's next detective—Henri Castang, a French policeman—was never as vivid or interesting a character, nor was Castang's wife, former Czech gymnast Vera, a match for Arlette. First appearing in *A Dressing of Diamond* (1974), Castang ended his career (in retirement rather than death) in *A Dwarf Kingdom* (1996).

But some of Freeling's best work came in three late books without any of his continuing characters. *A City Solitary* (1985) and *One More River* (1998) concern expatriate English novelists who resemble their creator. In the former, Walter Forrestier, subject of a home-invasion robbery, is reluctant to help the police and winds up collaborating with the criminal. *One More River* is ostensibly a novel left behind by the late John Charles, who



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receives threats to his life from an unknown source. The author's-notebook format allows for tangents, artful disorganization, and shifts between first and third person. *Some Day Tomorrow* (1999), also calculatedly random and discursive, continues Freeling's exegesis on the Dutch national character, along with learned digressions on literary, biological, medical, geographical, social, and culinary topics, through the story of a retired Dutch botanist suspected of killing a teenage girl.

How can we account for Freeling's estrangement from the crime fiction establishment? H.R.F. Keating is repelled by his sense of superiority, finding him "infuriatingly knowing," with passages of untranslated French and obscure allusions. It's true that Freeling's literary, artistic, musical, and cinematic references are sometimes arcane, but not all readers are bothered by such authorial showboating. Dorothy L. Sayers had the same habit—to the point of having her two main characters propose marriage to each other in Latin.

Freeling's published attitudes to the field, both in his novels and critical writing, may have boiled more blood than his show of erudition. He heaped disdain on such characters as Chesterton's Father Brown, Stout's Nero Wolfe, Christie's Hercule Poirot, and Gardner's Perry Mason, and he was more scathing in his dismissal of bread-and-butter mystery fiction than any major figure since Raymond Chandler. Freeling viewed himself as a savior of the form, one who would bring quality of style, theme, and social commentary to a debased genre.

In *Criminal Convictions: Errant Essays on Perpetrators of Literary License* (1994), Freeling argues for the extension of crime fiction into the literary mainstream, believing virtually all great fiction is crime fiction. Of the eight writers he discusses, four are generally considered outside the genre (Stendhal, Dickens, Conrad, Kipling) and four within (Doyle, Chandler, Sayers, Simenon). For the latter group, his approval is only partial. He likes Sherlock Holmes but blames the sleuth's success for the later emergence of racist vigilantes like Bulldog Drummond. *Gaudy Night* is virtually the only Sayers novel he deems successful. Even Maigret is admired only for his earliest cases. In discussing Chandler (and finding only his first four novels praiseworthy), he dismisses Dashiell Hammett as a poor writer. Along the way, Freeling manages swipes at Anthony Berkeley, Erle Stanley Gardner, and Margery Allingham, while faintly praising Ross Macdonald.

Then there is the matter of Freeling's political views, which some critics, especially of the Castang novels, have found intrusive. His left-liberal European socialist perspective, including a fuzzy view of crime and punishment, may grate on conservative readers. In *The Lovely Ladies*, Freeling summarizes his ambivalent views on the police: "A policeman has a good trade put to poor use, like a painter commanded to put a coat of glossy enamel over rusty corrugated iron, shrugging, and doing as he is told." He assumes that police generally are corrupt, brutal, and incompetent; that capital punishment is barbaric and prisons an abomination. He compares crime with art in a passage from *Criminal Convictions* unlikely to cheer victims and prosecutors: "Crime is the expression of longing and losing, and what else is our poetry, our music? We seek and do not find; upon this harsh condition we build our frustrations, our self-hatreds. The nature of crime is also the nature of art."

But it isn't that simple, even to Freeling. Some of his most sweeping statements of European leftist views come from the mouth of Walter Forrestier in *A City Solitary*. But, in light of the way the novel ends, can we assume Freeling really believes all the views he gives Walter? The novel could be read as showing up the barrenness of the left in its seeming denial of evil. Sometimes Freeling, more independent thinker than ideologue, comes across more centrist than leftist. In *A City Solitary* he writes: "The only difference between left- and right-wing governments was that the left did slightly sillier things, but with slightly better intentions."

Meanwhile, the Van der Valk and Castang series presents a continuing tribute to marriage. Husband and wife relationships are at the heart of his work—he depicts good marriages and bad, and in the bad ones, the husband is generally at fault. Often his protagonists' wives seem better than they deserve. In his critical writing, he celebrates Cissy Chandler as a key to her husband Raymond's success. In *One More River*, novelist John Charles considers the marriage of Samuel Pepys. Mrs. Pepys "is a sweet woman, true, good, honest." In Pepys's diary passages after she discovers his infidelity, "There are few pages, I think, in which naked suffering is so baldly set down. 'Poor wretch,' he says, of both women. He realizes that he loves both, and is in hideous torment. He is too honest to say it of himself." Eventually Charles comes to realize how he drove away his own wife and in the last entries in his notebook wants her back.

All of this is fascinating, all of this is great reading—and nearly all of this is forgotten. Rewarding even when most annoying, Freeling deserves a serious revival. ♦

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Invincible Ignorance

Haynes and Klehr on America's continuing apologists for Stalin. BY DAVID EVANIER

Through the late 1970s, the consensus among American historians was that communism and Nazism were equally despotic systems. That view was held by Theodore Draper, the foremost historian on American communism, Irving Howe, and Sidney Hook, among many others.

But the subsequent generation of "New Left" scholars furiously attacked this idea. Anti-communism led to the Cold War, McCarthyism, and Vietnam. Suspicion of the American Communist party was "baseless paranoia," and American Communists were unsung heroes working for democratic ideals. Anti-Communist liberals were merely "liberal McCarthyites," and when the Communist party was driven to the margins of American politics in the 1950s, something great was lost to America.

In Denial
Historians, Communism & Espionage
by John Earl Haynes and Harvey Klehr
Encounter, 316 pp., $25.95

You'd think that the collapse of the evil empire would have weakened their position, but since 1989 their fury and disappointment have risen to fever pitch and show no signs of abatement. It's this refusal to face facts—now, when they are so clear—which has prompted John Earl Haynes and Harvey Klehr to write *In Denial: Historians, Communism & Espionage*, their attack on the neo-revisionism of contemporary scholarship about communism.

Haynes and Klehr have, between them, produced eleven notable books on the subject of American communism and Soviet espionage. When the Russians briefly opened up the archives of Communist activity stretching back to the beginning of the Bolshevik movement and the creation of the Soviet Union, Klehr was the first American scholar to examine the enormous documentary collections of the Comintern. He found a substantial correspondence between the Comintern and American Communists, copies of Comintern orders, reports from Comintern representatives in America who supervised the Communist party, and thousands of pages of transcribed testimony from American Communist officials who journeyed to Moscow each year. The material from the archives demonstrated conclusively that the American Communist party had a clandestine "secret apparatus" that cooperated with Soviet intelligence agencies.

In their pioneering works, *The Secret World of American Communism* and *The Soviet World of American Communism*, Haynes and Klehr definitively documented the cooperation between the Communist International, the Communist party, and Soviet foreign espionage agencies. They showed the International's secret financial underwriting of the Communist Party USA, and Comintern control over the party's policies and leadership. Then, in the groundbreaking book *Venona*, through the translation and interpretation of intercepted Soviet intelligence telegrams, they sealed the case against Julius Rosenberg, Alger Hiss, Harry Dexter White, and scores of other heroes of the "progressive Left."

David Evanier is the author of Red Love, The One-Star Jew *and* Making the Wiseguys Weep, *and co-author with Joe Pantoliano of* Who's Sorry Now.

Stanford University

Herbert Aptheker

Their latest joint effort, *In Denial*, is restrained, deliberative, and authoritative. Their subjects, history professors, are another matter. Rarely has a scholarly crew used such irrationality, casuistry, and invective, or been guilty of such delusional wish-fulfillment. Worse, the professors in question are not soapbox nuts and cranks on the margins, but important figures at the heart of the new historical establishment. Their clearest motive is their longing to return to the days of Soviet power in the world and Communist party insurgency in the United States. "Too many revisionists present a view of history," Haynes and Klehr write, "in which the wrong side won the cold war."

In its earlier incarnation, revisionism's aim was primarily to discredit anti-communism in the university. With the collapse of the New Left, the second wave of revisionists turned to the heyday of American communism to justify their radical commitment. They saw Communists as inspiring shapers and contributors to American politics and culture. The Communist party hadn't collapsed because of its Soviet worship and undemocratic ideology, but, as Haynes and Klehr

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explain the revisionist viewpoint, because "a fascistic American security regime . . . had spied upon and disrupted a radical movement."

The most revered scholar for some revisionists is the dean of Stalinist historians, Herbert Aptheker. Interviewed with reverence in the prestigious *Journal of American History* in 2000, Aptheker advised younger "anti-capitalist" historians to practice "intense partisanship." He "could not understand the idea of objectivity" in history, for being objective meant "being part of the Right." The new revisionists practice Aptheker's creed with a vengeance, substituting stridency, evasion, special pleading, improbable scenarios, and the airbrushing of facts for traditional standards of scholarship.

Anti-communism is their bête noire. Blanche Wiesen Cook, for instance, writes that because of its fight against communism, America "stand[s] morally isolated before the world, allied with . . . killer countries . . . always bellowing, when we are not shrieking, and thumping and bumping and burping our bombs and tanks and missiles . . . everything fine and creative in American thought has been spattered and smeared by anti-communism." Joel Kovel writes that Hubert Humphrey's anti-communism was "a ritual of male bonding within which the signifier 'father' links Hubert Humphrey Jr., Hubert Humphrey Sr., Lyndon Johnson, and the whole ethos of America as a land where real men stand tall and stand together." As a result of anti-communism, writes Kovel, "millions of innocents lie dead, whole societies have been laid to waste, a vigorous domestic labor movement has been castrated, and the political culture of the U.S. has been frozen in a retrograde position." As if that weren't enough, Kovel adds that "anti-communism destroys time itself." Paul Buhle declares Harry Truman "America's Stalin" and concludes, "When the judgment of the twentieth century's second half is made, every American president will be seen as a jerk."

The Nation

Victor Navasky

The 1995 disclosure of the Venona documents, the deciphered cables between KGB spies in the United States and Moscow that further confirmed American Communists' extensive role in espionage, have caused a few revisionists, such as Maurice Isserman, to admit honorably they were wrong about Soviet espionage and Soviet control of the American Communist party. There are still a few holdouts against the existence of Soviet espionage, including Victor Navasky, Bernice Schrank, and William A. Reuben. But most, while no longer denying Soviet espionage, have simply shifted ground. Ellen Schrecker now says the disclosures are "old news," although they were never "new news" to her. "In the academic world," Haynes and Klehr write, "the movement to honor Soviet spies and Stalinist acolytes had long been underway." They point out that Bard College created the Alger Hiss Chair of Social Studies (now held by Joel Kovel). When it comes to espionage, many revisionists make it clear that Soviet spies who lied about their activities are admirable, and defectors who told the truth are slime—for the spies did it out of "soaring motives," according to Ellen Schrecker. Schrecker sums it up: "Were these activities so awful? They thought they were building a better world for the masses."

Yeshiva University

Ellen Schrecker

The revisionists charge that anti-Communist historians take undue pleasure in the triumph of the West in the Cold War, and they are enraged by this celebration. Writing of America's victory over communism, Joel Kovel declared his "bitterness that those I had considered, as the Sandinista anthem put it, 'the enemy of humanity' were strutting about and boasting that history had ended on their terms." Kovel, obviously, thought we should be in mourning. As Haynes and Klehr note, "No such charge would have been made . . . against those writing books about the outcome of the Allied war against the Nazis."

The truth is that Ellen Schrecker's "masses" have thoroughly repudiated communism, wherever and whenever they have been its victims. "To be a Communist," write Haynes and Klehr, "was to be part of a rigid mental world tightly sealed from outside influences, and this seal partitioned [American Communists] from reality." In raging retreat, the revisionists have replicated this sealed, Alice-in-Wonderland world in the ivory towers of academia, far from the sweaty realities of the streets and their beloved masses. Incredibly enough, it is a domain they largely control, imposing their fantasies on students, leading historical journals and textbooks, and on the entire history profession.

John Earl Haynes and Harvey Klehr's *In Denial* could not be more timely. ♦

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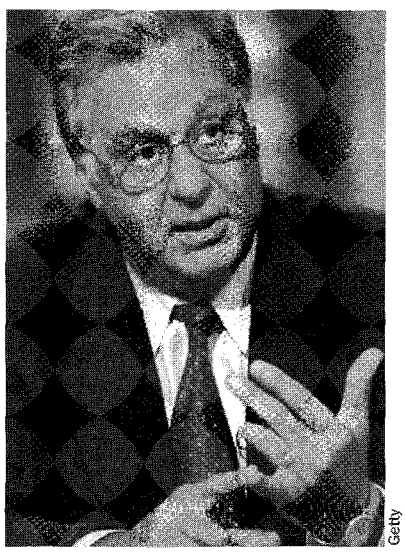
An Armey of One

And his forty axioms.

BY NOEMIE EMERY

Most books by political figures come in two genres—phony and phonier—as politicians, lusting for office or looking at history, rewrite their stories to make themselves look appealing and their opponents look sinister.

Dick Armey, the former Republican House majority leader who left office of his own volition after the 2002 elections, has done something far more interesting in *Armey's Axioms*: He has written a book that is both refreshing and useful—even if it remains a little hard to describe.



Getty

Armey's Axioms is not a memoir, although reminiscence is in it; and it is not a treatise, although views are explained. Rather, it is framed as a series of forty lessons concerning the nature of power and image in human relationships. Along the way, three different themes become evident.

Armey's Axioms
40 Hard-Earned Truths from Politics, Faith, and Life
by Dick Armey
John Wiley, 258 pp., $22.95

The first is a defense of the author's conservative principles. The second is a list of the mistakes to avoid if one wishes a life inside politics. And the third is a list of the things to avoid if one wants *any* kind of a life.

Noemie Emery is a contributing editor to THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

One of the things that Armey will tell you is that political life is unfair. "Liberals tend to focus on outcomes," he writes. "This is why they like big government in situations where they are not required to produce the means." Liberals promise to take you to Disneyland while conservatives warn you that school is tomorrow—and that, anyhow, you may not have enough money to get to Disneyland. For instance, everyone wants to attain "social justice," but no two people agree on its meaning, and efforts to force it, like affirmative action, always cause terrible rows and problems.

In similar mode, liberals tend to back "fairness" (which always means some kind of government program) while conservatives like to let people spend their own money, which liberals talk down as "greed." To Armey, private spending is the path to a well-run society, as it tends to create a good life for more people by keeping costs under control. Spending privately, as he tells us, people spend carefully. "They shop. They compare. They ration. Everything they buy is considered against the next-best alternative. They understand the limits of their finances, and are careful not to waste. In so doing, they guide the country to an efficient allocation of its resources, and to that basket of goods that provides maximum happiness." By contrast, he cites the cases of health care and college, both of which have come under the benevolent eye of the federal government—and seen their costs soar out of sight.

Armey views congressmen who back lavish funding for diseases suffered by their own friends and relatives as selfish in the extreme. "Many of these maladies . . . deserve the attention of the federal government. However, they should be weighed objectively against one another with regard to their overall benefit. . . . My point is that people elected to high office have no right to legislate their own heartaches. . . . Yet they do it, and when they do it, they fight like cornered rats." Armey seems to know that for this piece of normative conservative thinking he will be savaged for being "hard-hearted," although in reality he is looking out for the interests of others with different diseases and no powerful friends to plead for them, who will be shortchanged in the process. But this can be hard to explain.

If Armey the theorist is a predictable figure, Armey the mentor is not. But most of this book is a series of home truths—strictly nonpartisan—about the mistakes people make. He blames his own party for the James Jeffords defection, which temporarily cost it control of the Senate; and Newt Gingrich himself for most of Newt's troubles. In the first case, Republicans misread the balance of power: Jeffords held all the cards in the power equation, and they themselves held very few.

Though nominally elected on the Republican line, he was wholly in tune with his liberal voters and through a defection would stand to gain everything: adulation, publicity, ego satisfaction, book contracts, and praise. In trying to either pressure or punish him, Republican leaders, standing on the narrow ground of a one-vote majority, had everything to lose, and

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they did. For Gingrich, Armey coins the axiom: "If you insist on center stage, you get the tomatoes." Gingrich did not seem to realize he had made himself into an irresistible target.

In short, Armey advises politicians to under-promise and over-perform, not brag about triumphs until they develop and possibly not even then. He disputes the adage "Don't get mad, get even," calling vengeance a sad waste of energy. When you make a mistake, he advises, do not revisit it in an attempt to correct it; it will just revive bad old memories. ("When you run over a skunk, it is going to leave a terrible smell . . . but if you drive far enough, fast enough you can leave it behind.") He tells us not to brood over slights, but to trust in the public's good judgment: "Your audience is a world of third parties, and you must rely on their good sense."

Armey's Axioms is a book about politics—in the lower-case sense of the word: a series of lessons in life. "Some people don't feel free unless they are free from responsibility," Armey informs us. "If that is your misunderstanding, you will never be free and you will never be happy. You will live your life like a hapless child, being forever a victim in a world that seems too demanding and too cruel." He tells us we can never be happy unless we live for something beyond our own comfort.

He also tells us not to rely on the kindness of strangers: "When you tell people your troubles, 90 percent of them don't care and the other 10 percent are glad you have them," he says. He warns us never to look for perfection in others, warns us that life can often turn "ugly," and that when we are faced with a difficult problem, it is better to face it head on. He tells us that relationships can often end badly, and that we must be prepared to pay up when they do. "If you want the divorce . . . you give up the house," Armey tells us. "Don't expect to get out of the trap and take the cheese with you."

Your mother may have once told you this, but you can't hear it too often. Read this and learn. ♦

See You Later, Dear

Audrey Niffenegger pens a love story for the ages.

BY CYNTHIA GRENIER

Audrey Niffenegger has written a singularly beguiling novel with an unexpectedly touching love story—even though, as she explains, her hero Henry and his wife Clare first met when he was thirty-six years old and she was six. The working out of that little thirty-year problem is the burden, and the charming success of *The Time Traveler's Wife*.

The Time Traveler's Wife
by Audrey Niffenegger
MacAdam Cage, 518 pp., $25

The prologue sets the tone for Henry's strange bounces through time and Clare's patient waiting for him, never knowing at what age or what moment he will reappear in her life. As she says, "It's hard being left behind. I wait for Henry, not knowing where he is, wondering if he's okay. It's hard to be the one who stays." Then we shift to Henry, who explains, "It feels exactly like one of those dreams in which you suddenly realize that you have to take a test you haven't studied for and you aren't wearing any clothes. And you've left your wallet at home."

Time travel has been a staple plot device for a while, now. Mark Twain's 1889 *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* set in place the basic structure of backward travel: a modern man cast into the past for mostly comic but also a little bit of serious effect. At one moral pole of backward travel stands Ray Bradbury's 1952 story "A Sound of Thunder," a classic claim of the fragility of history, in which a tourist goes dinosaur-hunting on a time-traveling safari, accidentally kills a single butterfly, and returns to find the present badly altered. At the other pole stands the 1985 film *Back to the Future*, a classic in its own way, about ultimately benevolent time travel and the chance of going backwards to make things better. You can find the happy view echoed in, say, the 1993 film *Groundhog Day*, with Bill Murray awakening in the same day, over and over again, until he finally gets it right. And the darker vision is manifest in Ken Grimwood's 1987 *Replay*, a rather underrated novel about a man who awakens in his eighteen-year-old body after a fatal heart attack at age forty-three—and tries to replay his life.

Meanwhile, forward travel through time quickly became a standard way of writing utopian literature, from Samuel Madden's 1733 *Memoirs of the Twentieth Century* to Edward Bellamy's 1887 American classic *Looking Backward*. But forward travel spawned its darker versions, too, from H.G. Wells's 1895 *The Time Machine* to Kurt Vonnegut's 1969 *Slaughterhouse-Five*.

Still, the science-fiction constraints and logic-puzzle burdens spoil most of this genre. Only a handful of books escape: Jack Finney's 1970 *Time and Again*, perhaps; Connie Willis's two classics, the comic 1998 *To Say Nothing of the Dog* and the moving 1992 *Doomsday Book*; and, now, Audrey Niffenegger's *The Time Traveler's Wife*.

Henry and Clare progress through the book, more or less in alternating time frames. For Henry—the unwilling traveler who, from time to time, inexplicably finds himself naked in some other time—this can be difficult. He is apt, for instance, to exist simulta-

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neously at two different ages, as early on he is trying to explain his time adventures under the heading: "Saturday, January 2, 1988, 4:03 A.M. / Sunday, June 16, 1968, 10:46 P.M. (Henry is 24, and 5)."

On one trip, he begins by coming home half drunk from a night of dancing, fumbling for his keys, and falling down to his knees—only to look up to see a red, illuminated EXIT sign. As his eyes adjust, he sees tigers, cavemen with long spears, cavewomen wearing strategically modest skins, and wolfish dogs. Heart racing, for a long liquor-befuddled moment he thinks, "*I've gone all the way back to the Stone Age*—until I realize that EXIT signs tend to congregate in the twentieth century."

There is humor in this curious tale, but bleak moments as well. In some of Henry's time travels (all in a fairly limited time frame) he encounters people—in particular a beautiful, very unhappy woman named Ingrid—whose fate he knows but can do nothing about. And towards the end something quite ghastly happens to him on one of his trips.

But from the time Clare reenters his life as an adult, there is no doubt but that they are in love—a deep, abiding love that sees them through courtship, marriage, miscarriages, and the birth of a daughter, Alba, who, it seems, inherits her father's strange propensity for traveling about in time.

Periodically, Henry tries to figure out what is the matter with him. Before they marry, he tells Clare that on an EEG he has the brain of a schizophrenic. "More than one doctor has insisted that this little time-travel delusion of mine is due to schizophrenia." One doctor offers up the idea that Henry's genes are scrambled—Chrono-Displacement Disorder—but this is almost an aside. Niffenegger is not interested in resetting his genetic clock. She is writing about love—a love that transcends the usual boundaries of time.

The Time Traveler's Wife ends—well, almost ends—when Henry seems to meet the death that he foresaw off and on in the earlier portions of the story. Clare, alone at age thirty-five on February 2, 2007, "past hunger, past vanity, past caring," finds a letter Henry left for her, dated that December, saying he hopes his death "was simple and clean and unambiguous." He wants to tell her: "Our love has been the thread through the labyrinth, the net under the high-wire walker, the only real thing in this strange life of mine I could ever trust." It wouldn't be quite right to tell how the tale comes out, but I will say that Niffenegger was right to select—for a fitting close to a surprisingly satisfying book—lines from Homer's *Odyssey* that describe Odysseus's coming home at last to Penelope. ♦

Early Days

The first book on the 2004 campaign.

BY ANDREW FERGUSON

Walter Shapiro has done us all a favor. Over the last two winters, while the rest of us were minding our own business, Shapiro drove hundreds of miles crowded into the back seat of rented automobiles, talking to Howard Dean. And this was just the beginning. Shapiro flew in a twin-engine Cessna with John Kerry, attended Manhattan cocktail parties with Joe Lieberman, and canvassed treeless tracts of suburban St. Louis with Dick Gephardt—many months before any normal person had given a thought to the presidential election. And you say you hate your job.

One-Car Caravan
On the Road with the 2004 Democrats Before America Tunes In
by Walter Shapiro
Public Affairs, 220 pp., $25

Shapiro is a political columnist for *USA Today*, so he did these things at least partly from professional obligation. But to judge by *One-Car Caravan: On the Road with the 2004 Democrats Before America Tunes In*, it is clear that he did these things mainly because he loves to do them. "For all my cynicism about presidential politics in election years," he writes, "I still thrill to the innocent simplicity of the off years when it all begins." (Yes, he said "thrill.") That's when the candidates, happy for the attention, are at once most accessible and least guarded. "The best way to gauge their personalities, their intellects, their motivations, and their aspirations is to be there at the beginning."

Really, there's not much evidence here of Shapiro's "cynicism about presidential politics." He is at heart an idealist, though not a booby. His sketches of the Democratic contenders as they crisscrossed Iowa and New Hampshire over the last eighteen months are witty and hard-headed and make excellent reading, with happy little surprises scattered here and there. One night, for example, driving to the annual dinner of the Cheshire County Democrats in Keene, New Hampshire, Shapiro asks Dean why he is running for president.

"The answer should be that I deeply care about it," the doctor replies. "But the way it happens is that I'm very intuitive, so I was driven toward running before I knew why I was doing it. I know that doesn't make any sense. It sounds like I'm just a very ambitious person who wants to be president."

Well, yeah. It does. And it's the kind of candor that before too long is pressed out of any serious candidate. Shapiro's long hours in the back of rental cars have not been spent in vain. He has done this so we don't have to. Accept the gift. ♦

Andrew Ferguson is a senior editor at THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

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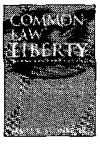
"Never judge a book by its cover, unless, of course, the cover has the name 'Robert James Waller' on it."

Books in Brief



***Common-Law Liberty: Rethinking American Constitutionalism* by James R. Stoner Jr. (University of Kansas Press, 212 pp., $29.95).** American law begins with the Constitution of 1787. Or so we like to think. James Stoner usefully reminds us, however, that American law also includes the common law—indeed that the Constitution itself can't be understood without consulting the common law, whose roots were in England but which Americans "claimed as their inheritance."

Want to know what the framers meant when they declared that Congress may not pass a "bill of attainder or ex post facto law"? For the definitions of both (and such other terms as "writ of habeas corpus," "natural born," and "good behavior"), you'll need to look in the common law. Meanwhile, important portions of the Constitution presuppose the common law. Article III assigns to a single set of courts "all cases in law and equity." Article VI secures supremacy through courts of law. And in the Bill of Rights the rights largely concern legal process.

Stoner observes the tendency among liberals and conservatives alike to dismiss the importance of the common law for constitutional law. Liberals, following Oliver Wendell Holmes, tend to see the common law as merely providing a process of rational change by which even the substance of the common law may be reversed. Conservatives tend to see constitutional interpretation as a matter of discerning the will of the people as declared in specific texts. Although *Common-Law Liberty* takes sharp issue with the liberals' approach, Stoner winds up embracing a "living Constitution." Not, assuredly, the one of Holmes, Earl Warren, William Brennan, et al., but one that "invites us to engage in dialogue with the wisdom of ages other than our own and to see the verdicts of the moment in the perspective of a larger whole."

—Terry Eastland

***Three Weeks in October: The Manhunt for the Serial Sniper* by Charles A. Moose and Charles Flemming (Dutton, 322 pp., $23.95).** Last year's sniper shootings around Washington, D.C., turned Charles Moose into something of a national figure. But those who follow policing issues knew him before as a wonky, theory-driven policeman who remade the police in Portland, Oregon, and promised to do great things with the police in Montgomery County, in the Maryland suburbs of Washington.

Like a great many African-American police chiefs of his generation, Moose grew up middle class, spent a lot of time in school (he has a doctorate), and worked his way up by strategically alternating administrative assignments with work on the streets. He also appeared to escape the usual problems of race politics: Before the sniper incident, his success came from a hugely successful effort to restore safety to Portland's most infamous housing project.

It's odd then that his new book, *Three Weeks in October: The Manhunt for the Serial Sniper* (cowritten with Charles Fleming), is so obsessed with race. Those looking for insight into the Washington-area sniper shootings and the task force Moose headed will have to wait for another book. Aside from the chief's own emotions, *Three Weeks in October* reveals nothing the media didn't report last year. Instead, Moose shows himself bizarrely sensitive to all issues touching on race, ranging from a twenty-year-old altercation with a department-store clerk to the skin color of evidence technicians he worked with on the sniper case.

The problems don't stop there. *Three Weeks in October* contains at least a half-dozen minor errors, from the order in which New York City police chiefs served, to the places Washington-area residents shop. This is a book that tells almost nothing about either the sniper investigation or the man who headed it. The trial of the accused sniper is unfolding daily here in Washington, but Chief Moose's memoir, the book that ought to have helped us understand it, is not much help at all.

—Eli Lehrer

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Parody

"A senior Republican Congressional official said a significant amount of money allocated by Congress for the foreign language training of C.I.A. officers, particularly in Arabic, Persian, and Pashto, had been redirected by the agency. . . . An agency official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said he understood that some of the money had been spent on computer-driven document translation rather than on training for individual officers."

–The New York Times, November 5, 2003

SPECOPS/IRAQ

To: George Tenet, DCI
Date: November 5, 2003

Per your instructions, we're no longer wasting money on the language thing. Fine dining is the focus now—A. Chalabi assures me that roundtable discussions at Citronelle are yielding daily breakthroughs. We tried out the translation software on some old note to Saddam or whoever—something dug up by Bremer's boys in Baghdad. Take a look—I say the computer's good enough.

TRANSLATED OCT. 28 - 2003

FULL TEXT:

November 15, 2002
Baghdad, Iraq

To Esteemed Saddam, Great Finger, Tall [illegible]
and National Pumice Stone:

The United Nations Resolution 1441 proposal goat opportune to pass, for United States aggravation by Bush-pig. However, Dominique de Villepin very fragrant man. Villepin friend soon get Iraqi mango and finger basket. Weapons of mass destruction immediately like Koran phrase: "When the shepherd fortify sheep, two mouth eat goat hair."

In other news, Uday make big soccer coach team like ten thousand martyr pigeons. Uday frighten soccer team say shoot goal many times again. Sever fingers very fast, team play better but later goalie lose ear. Uday very fragrant man. Also is lucky beautiful woman from café with him goat BMW backseat play.

Qusay every day revamp intelligence service. Qusay proactive delegator and very fragrant man. Like great father Saddam Pumice Stone also like great Son-Pigeon. Iraq intelligence goat active and good, information like seven waterfalls flow on earlobe, many bad tongues chop chop.

Hans Blix come Iraq UN pig-dogs inspect. Blix not fragrant man. The chemical weapons not treat like have exist? Caution will not goat necessary. Perhaps we tell whole story about weapons: we goat of true but have yes make no. Salaam alakher!

Goat to follow. Once again, Great salutations to the One of Infinite Hair Finger and Thousand Cannon.

Sincerely,

BARZAN IBRAHIM HASAN AL-TIKRITI
Presidential Advisor and Honorable Vice Rooster

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Economic Growth—the Essence of Sustainable Development

Terry L. Anderson is the Martin and Illie Anderson Senior Fellow at the Hoover Institution. Laura E. Huggins is a research fellow at the Hoover Institution.

Thirty years ago, a group of academics known as the Club of Rome put forth the "limits to growth" theory, predicting disaster for humankind unless natural resource–depleting economic and technological progress were abandoned. This gloom-and-doom theory has been resurrected under the guise of sustainable development, calling for changes in virtually every aspect of our consumption and production.

"Sustainability," a seductive though vague term, argues that resource use today should leave future generations at least as well off as current generations. Of course nobody wants to make future generations poorer and less healthy, but this definition provides no guidance for how this result can be avoided. There is no way to know what resource use is acceptable today and no way to know what future generations may desire. Yet because of its deceptive simplicity, sustainability is applied to anything from agricultural practices to energy use to mining.

Implicit in the calls for sustainable development are two fundamental assumptions. The first is that we are running out of resources, thus leaving future generations with less; the second is that market processes are the cause of these depletions. But in fact, several studies offer evidence suggesting the opposite.

Resources are becoming less, not more, scarce. Agricultural yields for rice, corn, and wheat have increased for decades. Known reserves of oil, natural gas, and coal have been expanding, and accessible stocks of aluminum, zinc, iron, and copper have grown as technology develops more-conservative production techniques and the price mechanism encourages exploration and new discoveries of underground reserves. Moreover, life expectancy, housing, nutrition, and education levels are improving in both the developed and the developing world. In short, the prosperity we enjoy today is leaving future generations better off, not worse off.

How can this be? Sustainable development, if it can be defined as a call to maximize human welfare, is only possible in a legal system where property rights ensure market operability. Property rights (when well defined, enforced, and transferable) provide the structure that encourages development, innovation, conservation, and discovery of new resources. Growth, and increasing wealth through these methods, leads to improved environmental quality by raising demands for it and by providing the wherewithal to meet these demands. In this context, **economic growth is not the antithesis of sustainable development; it is the essence of it.** Therefore, how we deal with the evolution and protection of property rights in the future will determine not only how free and prosperous we are but also how much environmental quality we enjoy.

Sustainable development stems from sustainable institutions—political and economic systems based on secure property rights and the rule of law. Doomsayers, however, continue to profess, as they have since Thomas Malthus, that exponential economic growth and consumption will ultimately run up against resource limits. They call for more government regulation to stop this growth. If their calls are successful, we will have neither sustainable growth nor sustainable improvements in environmental quality. It is not resources that are too scarce but the institutions that ensure human freedom. Only by sustaining those institutions will we be able to sustain development and advance environmental quality—only then can we have our environmental cake and eat it too!

—Terry L. Anderson and Laura E. Huggins

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